

April 2012



**Mystery Unfolding:
Leading in the Evolutionary Now**
LCWR Assembly
August 7 - 10 (evening)
(Travel home recommended for August 11)
St. Louis, Missouri

LCWR National Board Addresses Key Questions Facing Religious Life Leadership

Gathering in the desert at the Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson, Arizona, the LCWR national board met to discuss some of the essential issues facing US religious life and the conference, and to conduct its regular business.

The meeting, held from February 19 to 23, covered a wide range of topics pertinent to LCWR and religious life leadership. In addition to reports from the presidency, the LCWR regions, the LCWR staff, and various committees, the agenda included discussion of the following:

- The need for a context statement for both religious life in these times, and for LCWR as it continues to operate now and into the future
- Healthcare reform and the HHS mandate
- The need to encourage LCWR members to consider service as an LCWR officer
- The LCWR resolution process and its purpose for

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*Members of the
LCWR national
board and staff at
February
meeting in
Tucson*

From the LCWR Presidency

What's Most Essential?

by Pat Farrell, OSF — LCWR President

Perhaps you have experienced what I just have. I recently returned from several days on the road to a pile of messages and unfinished tasks on my desk. I began to sort, asking myself, "What needs most immediate attention here? What do I do first? What's most essential?" As I set about prioritizing, those questions repeated within me and I began to hear them on multiple levels. I realized that "What's most essential?" is the ultimate Lenten question. It might just be the ultimate leadership question, as well.



community to keep pointing us in its direction. The call to conversion invites a prioritizing and reordering not unlike sorting what's on my desk. It asks where I focus my attention and how I spend my time, where my treasure lies and where my heart is.

I've come to understand conversion less as an effort to do better. It's more about recognizing what I can't do. I am unable to see beyond the limits of my current consciousness, imagination, and vision.

I am powerless to heal my own inner blindness, or to see what I've not yet been given to see. That awareness sends me back to the Source, reminds me who I am, after all, and who God is. God is the one who restores sight and gives the gift, in abundance. I

In this time of massive transition, as so much of religious life as we've known it falls away, how are we to lead? We are not passive spectators of the unraveling going on around us. Nor are we, as women of faith, alarmists. In fact, I am noticing a remarkable lack of fear and a curious sort of expectancy among us. We're also not called to be super women, catapulting ourselves into "fix-it" mode, as if working harder at more

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of the same would change the course of the future. But fortunately, sometimes when we're not even making an effort, important questions whisper themselves to us. What is essential to our role of leadership? What is essential to religious life going forward?

In the context of Lent, one answer I hear is "conversion." Isn't it core to our life of discipleship? It's the permanent path, the narrow gate, and we need a

am the one who needs to remember to ask and seek and knock, and to trust that what I need will always be given, a fish, not a stone.

I am also unable, on my own, to move beyond the staleness of my response to the entrenched issues of church, society, and even my own congregation. To access the freshness and surprising twist of the Gospel's view, my reordering might be about placing myself where Jesus did, in those frowned-upon places with those less acceptable people and their questionable viewpoints. How, as leaders, do we do that while holding the tensions, but do it nonetheless? Just to hold the awareness of that invitation is the stuff of conversion.

LCWR National Board Addresses Key Questions

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the conference

- Preparation for the meeting with Archbishop Joseph Tobin regarding the apostolic visitation
- Initiatives to assist Catholic sisters living and working in Haiti
- Ways of supporting Catholic sisters who have immigrated to the United States

In concluding the meeting, the board and staff engaged the LCWR “Behold, I am Doing Something New Contemplative Process” to corporately reflect on the meeting proceedings in light of what they may be calling women religious to in the future. Noting the great willingness of women religious to engage a future that is very much emerging, the final statement of the group from this process is: *“Trusting in God, there is an emerging, collective readiness for ...”*



LCWR board engages in the “Behold, I am Doing Something New Contemplative Process”

Joint Meeting with CMSM

The national board of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men convened at the same time and, in addition to gathering together for daily prayer, Eucharistic liturgy, meals, and socials, the boards held two joint sessions. Among the items on the joint meeting agenda was discussion of the following:

- Review of and suggestions for how the USCCB may update its “Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral



Janice Bader, CPPS and Dan Ward, OSB address the LCWR and CMSM boards at a joint session

- Ministers in the United States”
- Plans for a workshop on palliative care sponsored by the Catholic Health Association, LCWR, and CMSM
- An effort being undertaken by LCWR, CMSM, the Religious Formation Conference (RFC), and the Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) to explore ways of collaborating more closely
- The feasibility of holding concurrent assemblies with other organizations serving women and men religious

Looking to the Future with RCRI and NRRO

In addition, Janice Bader, CPPS, executive director of the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO), and Dan Ward, OSB, executive director of RCRI, attended the joint meeting and shared current data on religious institutes in the United States. The data show a precipitous decline in the number of religious in compensated ministry, an increase in the average age of those serving in leadership, the number of institutes that will run out of funds within the next five to 10 years, and the growing complexity of the decisions that institutes are now facing. Both NRRO and RCRI are looking at options for what US religious life may need to do in order to have a viable future and are exploring how religious may help define what the next chapter of religious life may look like.

Additional photos from the meeting are on the LCWR website at www.lcwr.org/media/news/february-23-2012-lcwr-national-board-meets-tucson

New Leaders Gather for LCWR Workshop

Approximately 90 women religious leaders from the United States and Canada attended the recent LCWR New Leader Workshop held in Mundelein, Illinois from March 15 to 18.

Nancy Schreck, OSF served as the workshop facilitator, as well as a presenter, and was joined by faculty members: Janice Bader, CPPS; Judy Carey, RSM; Simone Campbell, SSS; Lynn Jarrell, OSU; and Lynn Levo, CSJ.

The days consisted of faculty presentations, prayer rituals, table sharing, and integration sessions where participants met as leadership teams. Those in attendance also reflected on their workshop experience via the LCWR “Behold, I am Doing Something New Contemplative Process,” asking what might be emerging for religious life at this moment in history. A statement written by one of the workshop participants, Therese Ann Quigney, SSFCR, is on the LCWR website at: <http://lcwr.org/media/news/90-new-leaders-participate-workshop> -- along with additional photos from the workshop.

The next New Leader Workshop is scheduled for March 21 to 24, 2013 in Mundelein.



Nancy Schreck, OSF offers a reflection during the workshop



Participants enjoy the campus at the University of St. Mary of the Lake



Additional Copies of Winter 2012 Occasional Papers Available

Due to a printer overrun, the LCWR national office has additional copies of the Winter 2012 issue of *Occasional Papers*. Copies may be purchased for \$4.00 each, using the order form on the LCWR website at lcwr.org/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/OPordersWinter12.pdf



LCWR Officers Meet with CICALSAL Secretary

Archbishop Joseph Tobin, CSsR, secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life invited the leadership of the Council for Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR) and LCWR to a meeting on March 2 to discuss the response of women religious in the United States to the apostolic visitation. LCWR past-president Mary Hughes, OP and LCWR executive director Janet Mock, CSJ joined CMSWR chairperson Mother Regina Marie Gorman, OCD and assistant chairperson Mother Ann Marie Karlovic, OP for the meeting at the apostolic nunciature in Washington, DC. The new apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, also attended the meeting to strengthen his understanding of religious life in the United States.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the leaders of the two conferences to share the experiences of their members with the apostolic visitation and voice insights about the process and its impact on the lives of US women religious.

All present at the meetings shared their concerns about preserving religious life as it moves into the future at a time when many institutes are rapidly decreasing in size. Mary and Janet were able to share what LCWR is doing to study the trends occurring within US religious life and some of the relationships being established among various congregations as a way of supporting one another in these critical times.

The LCWR leaders reported that the meeting was exceedingly cordial and that the conversation with Archbishop Tobin was open, honest and engaging.

LCWR Participates in Leadership Development Collaborative Planning

The Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas invited LCWR, RFC, several congregation leaders, other women religious and associates, as well as other collaborators to a two-day planning session held at the Washington Theological Union in February. The session focused on creating a multi-congregational, international leadership development program for vowed members, associates, and co-members of religious congregations who are under 60 years of age.

The leadership collaborative seeks to prepare younger women to assume leadership in the church and in civil society, recognizing that the future will require leadership expertise within religious congregations and their formally established associations, and in external ministerial, ecclesial, and societal arenas.

A design team will convene in late March to begin shaping the structure and content of this leadership development effort.

The project is being spearheaded by LCWR members Eileen Campbell, RSM and Deborah Troillett, RSM. LCWR executive director Janet Mock, CSJ and LCWR associate director for communications Annmarie Sanders, IHM represented the conference at the meeting. Among those who also attended were LCWR members Nancy Conway, CSJ; Ellen Maroney, IHM; and Terry O'Rourke, IHM; former LCWR members Catherine Bertrand, SSND; Eileen Dooling, RSM; and Joy O'Grady, CSC; and LCWR associate Patty Johnson, CSJ. Although not present at the February meeting, former LCWR president Mary Waskowiak, RSM will be working with the collaborative effort as well.

Leaders of Religious Life Conferences Throughout the Americas Meet in Colombia

by LCWR President Pat Farrell, OSF

Since 1971, leaders of the conferences for religious of the United States, Canada, and Latin America have met jointly each year. The three conferences take turns hosting the event in their respective part of the Americas. Recently Florence Deacon, OSF and I attended this year's InterAmerican Committee meeting in Colombia.

Gathering first in Bogota, we toured the offices of the Confederation of Latin American Religious (CLAR), met the office staff, and learned of CLAR's many activities and projects. The Colombians delighted in showing us around their capital city. The delight was, of course, mutual! The remainder of the meeting was held in Cartagena, a beautiful historic city on Colombia's Caribbean coast. There we met with local religious and the bishop of Cartagena and later visited a nearby island to see the work of religious with impoverished Afro-Colombians. A high point of our touring was a visit to the site of St. Peter Claver's work with African slaves passing through Cartagena.

Our own Inter-American Committee meeting was a very rich exchange about key issues, activities, concerns, and experiences of the different conferences. CLAR, for instance, found it helpful to hear of what US and Canadian religious are doing to deal with the myriad issues related to the diminishing numbers and aging of our congregations. They are anticipating a similar situation in the future and became more aware of their need to prepare. The Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) is experiencing a variety of emerging forms of religious life and will continue to share with us what they are learning from that. Canadian religious also described their structures for ongoing communication with their bishops and how they came to be. There was great interest in the US experience of *Women & Spirit* and the apostolic visitation. Conversation flowed easily, hindered only by limitations of time.

Following the Inter-American Committee meeting we also had the good fortune of participating in the Second

Congress of New Generations of Religious Life in the city of Medellin. More than 160 young women and men religious from 18 Latin American countries gathered for this three-day event sponsored by CLAR. It seemed fitting that it be held in Medellin where the Latin American Conference of Bishops (CELAM), in 1968, called the church of the continent not only to its famous preferential option for the poor, but also to a preferential option for youth. Prior to coming to Medellin, these 160 some religious had participated in a pre-congress with other young religious in their home countries, bringing the fruit of grassroots processes into the broader dialogue in Medellin.

The theme of the gathering was "Listen, Contemplate, Learn" with a day devoted to each. The "listening" focused on hearing the experiences and issues of each geographical region with accompanying theological reflection. "Contemplation" included quiet, prayerful reflection, but also being sent out to contemplate the face of Jesus seen in marginalized peoples in one of 15 locations at which area religious are involved in meeting critical needs in innovative ways. The day of "learning" included talks as well as small-group dialogue with invited elderly religious. Youthful energy and enthusiasm permeated everything and seemed to increase in volume each day, culminating in a rousing Eucharist and a compelling final statement. Each national delegation left with a CD summary of all proceedings and a

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Participants at the 2012 InterAmerican Committee meeting: Yvon Pomerleau, OP (CRC); Gabriel Naranjo, CM (CLAR); Pat Farrell, OSF; Mary Finlayson, RSCJ (CRC); John Pavlik, OFM Cap (CMSM); Domenico Di Raimondo, MSpS CMSM); Florence Deacon, OSF; Paulo Petry, FSC (CLAR)

Leaders of Religious Life Conferences Throughout the Americas Meet

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mandate to use it in hosting a national post-congress assembly upon returning.

I am always renewed by the warmth and celebratory exuberance of Latin America. But I also came away from this time in Colombia with a broader perspective from contact with religious of the Americas and a renewed hope from contact with a new generation of religious life. It was a rich and privileged experience.

Additional photos from this experience are on the LCWR website at <http://lcwr.org/calendar/2012-inter-american-committee-meeting>



LCWR Participates in NCR and Hilton Foundation Think Tank on Coverage of Women Religious Globally

The *National Catholic Reporter* invited LCWR president Pat Farrell, OSF and president-elect Florence Deacon, OSF to serve as part of a think tank to explore ways to report more broadly stories about the lives and ministries of women religious globally.

At the think tank, held on March 11 and 12 in Kansas City, the participants and NCR staff heard from Tom Fox, NCR editor, and Joyce Meyer, PBVM, Hilton Foundation board member, both of whom had recently returned from a month-long trip to various African na-

tions. NCR, with the help of a planning grant from the Hilton Foundation, is in the midst of an eight-month study in preparation for a grant from the foundation with the intention of significantly increasing its coverage of women religious around the world. As currently envisioned, the project would begin with a focus on eastern and central Africa, as well as parts of Asia, and expand coverage elsewhere in the months ahead. The core idea is to give greater coverage and voice to sisters while helping them to network and give greater vision to the global force of Catholic sisters carrying out the gospel imperatives.

NCR plans to initiate a website sometime in early 2013; it is tentatively called the “Global Catholic Sisters Network,” and would feature stories, columns, blogs, calendars, and related initiatives of sisters through the world. While NCR would host the website and support it in its Kansas City office, it would work with local reporters throughout the world. NCR says it wants the initiative to come out of the needs and desires of women religious.

Several other women religious attended the gathering including former LCWR president Camille D’Arienzo, RSM; LCWR member Anne Shephard, OSB; former LCWR member Esther Fangman, OSB; and LCWR associate director for communications and NCR board member Annmarie Sanders, IHM.

LCWR and Women Religious in the News

“My Female Faith Hero: Catholic Sisters”

Commentary by Tony Blair

Huffington Post

March 8, 2012

www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/tony-blair/tony-blair-international-womens-day-catholic-sisters_b_1330298.html

“Religious Groups Call Health Care Reform’s Medicaid Expansion a Moral Necessity”

International Business Times

Article by Ashley Portero

February 24, 2012

www.ibtimes.com/articles/304077/20120224/religious-groups-support-healthcare-reform-medicaid-expansion.htm

Consciousness and Campaigns: Spirituality and Politics beyond Dualism

“A problem cannot be solved within the same consciousness that created it.” –Albert Einstein

Thirty-five LCWR members and justice and peace coordinators gathered at Bethany Center near Tampa from March 5 to 8 to explore “Consciousness and Campaigns: Spirituality and Politics beyond Dualism.” In a society and church increasingly characterized by polarization and misunderstanding, how can people of good will find common ground? Where can people of faith find communion?

With the guidance of executive director of NETWORK, Simone Campbell, SSS, and composer and retreat director Jan Novotka, the group journeyed from contemplative silence and meditative song, to analysis of systems that divide, to an awakening to the essential unity of all.

Participants were challenged to dive deep into the mystical unitive consciousness and to cross the false boundaries and categories which divide and limit efforts to effect systemic change.

One participant observed that this experience “Has reinforced my commitment to prayer and helped me to understand why there are different views.” Another reported that the symposium brought together the way of deep spirituality with effective means to approach justice and peace ministry. All left certain that change is possible, even inevitable, if enough are willing to listen deeply and walk willingly.



Register for One Table, Many Partners: Haiti

Registration is now open for the June 1-3, 2012 solidarity conference at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. More information is available on the Haiti: One Table, Many Partners website (onetable.crs.org) including the program, venue, and lodging details.

The workshop for religious will be held on Saturday, June 2 at 10:15 - 11: 30 am. (This is a new time for this workshop.)

Mark Education Action Week 2012 April 22-28

Every child has the right to education. But every year, more than 200 million children under the age of five are denied that right, giving them less chance to achieve their potential and end the cycle of poverty.

The Global Campaign for Education is calling on world leaders to keep their promises and ensure early childhood care and education for every child, right from the start. More information about plans for the week is on Global Campaign for Education’s website (globalactionweek.org).



Jan Novotka; Simone Campbell, SSS; and Ann Scholz, SSND, LCWR associate director for social mission

Participants gather outdoors at Bethany Center

LCWR Acts for Justice

LCWR executive director, Janet Mock, CSJ joined 100 executive officers who signed a letter to President Obama requesting that he submit the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to the Senate by November 20, 2012, Universal Children's Day. The CRC is a multi-lateral treaty designed to promote the survival, development, protection, and participation of children worldwide. One hundred ninety-three countries are party to the treaty, including the Holy See. Only three countries in the world have yet to ratify the treaty: South Sudan, Somalia, and the United States. Additional information on CRC and ratification efforts is available on the Campaign for US ratification website (www.childrightscampaign.org).

LCWR also endorsed the Interfaith Budget Campaign's Priorities for a Faithful Federal Budget. The message is grounded in the sacred texts of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism and calls on the administration and leaders of both parties in Congress to: "Act with mercy and justice for the common good, robustly funding support for poor and vulnerable people, both at home and abroad, and exercising proper care and keeping of the earth." In the preamble to the document, the faith community states that a faithful budget must promote a compassionate and comprehensive vision of the future, and calls on elected leaders to craft a budget that fulfills the shared duty to all members of society and to future generations. The preamble, which has been endorsed by 35 religious organizations, and the more specific budget recommendations are available on the Faithful Budget website (faithfulbudget.org)



Commemorate the UN International Day of the Family

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux have developed a prayer service to commemorate the United Nations International Day of the Family, May 15. It is one in a series of prayer services to celebrate various UN international Days prepared for the Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

of the USG/UISG. The prayer is available on their website (jpinformation.wikispaces.com/EN_May15_prayer)

More information on the International Day of the Family can be found at social.un.org/index/Family/InternationalObservances/InternationalDayofFamilies.aspx. A complete list of UN observances is available on the UN website (www.un.org/en/events/observances/days.shtml).

NETWORK Celebrates 40th Anniversary and Honors LCWR

All are invited on April 14, 2012 to Trinity University in Washington, DC to celebrate NETWORK's 40 years of fidelity to the Gospel call for justice. The day will include an afternoon panel discussion moderated by *Washington Post* columnist EJ Dionne with Frida Berrigan; Carol Coston, OP; and Dr. Diana L. Hayes; a social hour and buffet supper; and an evening awards ceremony which will honor LCWR.

Details, including information about tickets, an online auction, and the celebration-day raffle, are available at www.networklobby.org/about-us/history.

Celebrate Earth Week

The Interfaith Moral Action on Climate, a coalition of faith leaders, is planning a week of activities April 21 to 27 to call for action by elected officials on climate change. Events are planned at venues around Washington, DC and throughout the country. The coalition seeks to awaken elected officials, business and civic leaders, and households to the urgent need for immediate action to address the deepening climate crisis so that all of creation is protected.

Supporters are urged to call on leaders to enact policies that dramatically reduce wasted energy and significantly shift our power supplies to wind, solar, geothermal, and other renewable energy sources and to enact policies that help people prepare for the impacts of climate change. Local groups are encouraged to ring church bells, incorporate prayers in worship services, plan interfaith vigils, marches, and other events during the week and on Earth Day, April 22. More information is available on the coalition's website (www.interfaithactiononclimatechange.org).

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 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



The California Museum of History, Women & the Arts

Sacramento, California -- January 24 - June 3, 2012

Remarks made at the opening of the exhibit in
Sacramento by LCWR President Pat Farrell, OSF
are available at

[lcwr.org/sites/default/files/products/attachments/
remarks_by_lcwr_president_pat_farrell_op_at_sacra-
mento_opening.pdf](http://lcwr.org/sites/default/files/products/attachments/remarks_by_lcwr_president_pat_farrell_op_at_sacramento_opening.pdf)

Consider Purchasing a Women & Spirit DVD



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.

Update

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

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2012 Life Commitment Program: Embracing Religious Life as a Prophetic Enterprise in the 21st Century

A program of the Religious Formation Conference for women and men religious about to embrace a lifetime commitment to consecrated life.

July 18 - 26, 2012

Franciscan Retreat Center
7740 Deer Hill Grove
Colorado Springs, CO 80919
719-955-7025

www.franciscanretreatcenter.org

More information and registration is available at
www.relforcon.org
(Programs ▶ Life Commitment Program)

Efforts Underway to Declare St. Josephine Bakhita Patron of Victims and Survivors

Efforts are underway to have St. Josephine Bakhita declared the patron of victims and survivors of human trafficking and slavery. A letter requesting consideration was sent to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in 2008. More recently, Oregon attorney and human trafficking activist Brian Willis sent a letter along with an icon, written by Benedictine Brother Claude Lane of Mount Angel Abbey, to Pope Benedict XVI seeking his support. Bakhita was declared a saint by Pope John Paul in 2000 who called her "a shining advocate of genuine emancipation."



Mr. Willis explains that in his experience while victims and survivors have many problems, one of the most common issues they face is hopelessness. St. Josephine found hope despite her trials.

Those seeking more information about Mr. Willis's work on behalf of this cause can contact him at bwillis40@gmail.com.



Orientation Seminar to the Management of Religious Institutes

April 30 - May 4, 2012

Techny Towers Conference and Retreat Center
Techny, IL

The Orientation to Management of Religious Institutes (OMRI) -- in its fourth year with RCRI -- is being held this year in Techny, Illinois. This seminar is designed as an instructive introduction for new finance personnel and leadership in religious institutes.

The 2012 OMRI addresses issues of concern and interest to members and employees of religious institutes, and provides an overview of topics and a good foundation in areas of importance to newly elected, appointed, or hired treasurers and leaders. It also offers a pre-session to help new lay employees understand the culture, language, charism, and focus of religious life. In addition to the instructional workshops, the OMRI seminar provides open forums for specific questions and guidance regarding the resources available.

The investment of time and money pays for itself in mistakes not made somewhere down the line. The added benefit of networking with others in the field is invaluable. More information and registration materials can be found at www.trcri.org.