

July 2012

## LCWR Discerns its Response to the Vatican Report

LCWR has taken a number of steps as part of the ongoing discernment of its response to the report issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on April 18, 2012 on the conference.

### May 29 - 31: LCWR Board Meeting

Over the course of three days, the LCWR national board met in a special session to review the CDF report and plan a response to it. Following the meeting, LCWR released a statement where it noted the board's concerns about the report which it felt was "based on unsubstantiated accusations and the result of a flawed process that lacked transparency." The statement noted as well that "the sanctions imposed were disproportionate to the concerns raised" and that it "caused scandal and pain throughout the church community and created

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## Mystery Unfolding: Leading in the Evolutionary Now

### LCWR Assembly

August 7 - 10 (evening)

(Travel home recommended for August 11)

St. Louis, Missouri

Assembly schedule and registration materials can be found in the Members area of the LCWR website

#### Registration Costs

Up to July 16	\$425.00 USD
After July 16	\$450.00 USD
After August 1	\$460.00 USD

All assembly participants are reminded that they must register for the assembly and for the hotel.

Information on preparing for the assembly is on page 4



LCWR board members Linda Szocik, SSJ-TOSF and Carol Zinn, SSJ review some of the hundreds of letters and petitions signed by thousands that were sent to the LCWR office regarding the CDF report

*From the LCWR Presidency*

## Stay the Course of Contemplation

by Pat Farrell, OSF — LCWR President

Questions from two different contexts have been repeating themselves in me of late. I am beginning to see how they are connected. The first context is the congregational visioning process my leadership team has initiated. As our community discerns how to focus future ministry, I keep wondering how we are to know what new needs are calling to us. How do we see what has not yet been obvious? Where do we place ourselves? With whom do we enter into conversation? Who are the different partners in dialogue who can stretch our perspective toward unheard cries to which we're being called to respond? Or is it simply a matter of collectively coming to notice what is already finding us?



weight of a new sense of responsibility. For some reason, a larger movement of God's trying to break through to something new has landed on us in the doctrinal assessment. The issues placed before us matter. So does our response. How we enter into the conversation, I believe, can make a significant difference.

It occurs to me that what these two contexts and their questions have in common is the need for a deepening capacity to encounter "the other." "The other" might be voices of need we've not yet heard, or persons whose mentalities make it difficult for us to find doors into effective dialogue. To meet "the other" as the other really is, beyond our pro-

The second context is that of the doctrinal assessment. In discerning responses, I've been keenly aware of the challenges and discipline of dialogue. Real dialogue. We find ourselves brought into conversation with men

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of the church, some with a different world view, ecclesial vision, style of leadership, and approach to power. Both sides of that dialogue have experienced times of impasse. It can feel like two cultures trying to communicate without a common language. Sadly, it can be difficult to find conditions for genuine dialogue, especially given the evident power differential. We need to at least name the necessity of first creating an environment that allows for an open exchange. But even at that, the question remains of how to move past what prevents us from really hearing one another. How do we get beneath the polarization? These questions carry the

jections and resistance, is certainly a skill to be honed, but also a capability born in contemplative spaciousness. The ability to contemplate the other, to really see, takes us outside our habitual consciousness. As Nancy Sylvester, IHM has articulated, contemplation is a path of transformation capable of transcending impasse. I believe it can carve out in us a deeper opening to God's presence in "the other."

Whether in response to congregational visioning or to the doctrinal assessment, I hear a clear call to stay the course of contemplation. God is indeed doing something new. A movement of change beyond LCWR is manifesting in the doctrinal assessment and general upheaval surrounding us. Much is at stake, calling for a response that comes from a place of contemplative depth.



## LCWR Discerns its Response to the Vatican Report

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greater polarization.” (A copy of the statement can be found at: [lchw.org/media/news/lcwr-board-meets-review-cdf-report](http://lchw.org/media/news/lcwr-board-meets-review-cdf-report).)

During the board meeting, the members had opportunities to review the hundreds of letters that had flooded the LCWR offices during the weeks prior to the meeting. These messages, coming from the public, and other women and men religious and clergy, expressed opinions about the CDF report as well as hopes for the



*LCWR board at its May meeting*

church. The LCWR staff also provided an analysis for the board of who has been writing, the themes in their messages, and the suggestions they offer.

### June 1: Interviews with the Press

Following the board meeting, LCWR president Pat Farrell, OSF agreed to a limited number of interviews with the media. She appeared on CBS Evening News and



*Pat Farrell, OSF on CNN Español*



*Correspondent Wyatt Andrews interviews Pat Farrell, OSF on the CBS Evening News*

CNN Español, and spoke with reporters from the *New York Times*, Associated Press, *National Catholic Reporter*, and Catholic News Service.

### June 12: LCWR Officers Meet with CDF

Pat Farrell and LCWR executive director Janet Mock, CSJ met with CDF prefect Cardinal William Levada and Archbishop Peter Sartain in Rome on June 12 for a two-hour meeting. The LCWR officers had requested the time with CDF to express the board’s concerns about the report. Immediately following the meeting, LCWR



*Janet Mock, CSJ and Pat Farrell, OSF are stopped by reporters in Vatican Square as they leave their meeting with CDF*

issued a statement saying that the encounter was open and that the officers were able to directly express their concerns to Cardinal Levada and Archbishop Sartain.

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## LCWR Discerns its Response to the Vatican Report

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### June 15: LCWR Board Holds Conference Call

The LCWR officers briefed the national board via a conference call on their June 12 meeting. Following the call, LCWR released a statement where it acknowledged that the meeting with CDF was difficult because of the differing perspectives the CDF officials and the LCWR officers hold on the matters raised in the report.

The statement also addresses the claims made by some Vatican officials and US bishops that the CDF report is not a reflection on all US Catholic sisters and is directed only to LCWR. The board noted in the statement that “the actions of CDF are keenly felt by the vast majority of Catholic sisters who have elected, and therefore feel a close identity with, their leaders. Moreover, the statements and gestures of solidarity from men religious and from conferences of Catholic sisters in other countries, as well as the letters and petitions from thousands of lay supporters worldwide, indicate that many others are also concerned about how to live as people of faith in the complexities of these times. The concerns they have shared with LCWR will be part of the conference’s discernment of its response to the CDF report.” (The statement may be found at: [lcwr.org/media/lcwr-continues-discernment-cdf-mandate](http://lcwr.org/media/lcwr-continues-discernment-cdf-mandate).)

The LCWR members will be meeting regionally during the weeks leading up to the assembly to prayerfully reflect on and discuss the CDF report and prepare for the August gathering.



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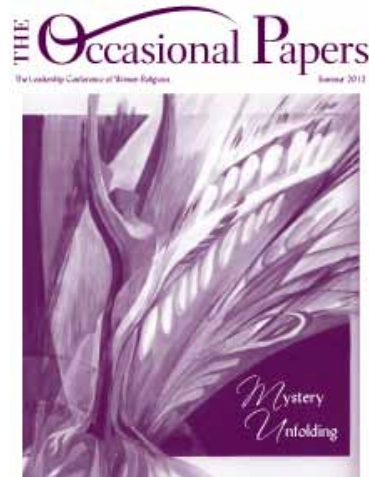
Editor: Annmarie Sanders, IHM  
 8808 Cameron Street — Silver Spring, MD 20910  
 Phone: 301-588-4955 Fax: 301-587-4575  
 E-mail: [asanders@lcwr.org](mailto:asanders@lcwr.org) Website: [www.lcwr.org](http://www.lcwr.org)



## Preparing for the LCWR Assembly

The LCWR assembly will provide opportunities to explore the ongoing transformation of the whole web of life, including human consciousness. To prepare for this gathering, LCWR recommends the following:

- ▶ Read the Summer 2012 issue of *Occasional Papers*. Copies are on their way to all members, associates, and subscribers, as well as those who placed special orders.



- ▶ Utilize the annotated bibliography, compiled by the Contemporary Religious Life Committee. Just added is information on the book, *Field of Compassion: How the New Cosmology is Transforming Spiritual Life* by Judy Cannato. ([lcwr.org/resources/leadership-pathways/bibliography](http://lcwr.org/resources/leadership-pathways/bibliography))

## LCWR Welcomes New Staff Member

LCWR has hired Mary J. Novak, JD, MAPS for one year to serve as a special assistant to the executive director. She will provide support to the staff as their workload increases due to the Vatican's doctrinal assessment.



Mary has more than 30 years of experience as an administrator, attorney, educator, organizer, spiritual director, peacebuilder, and chaplain. She returned earlier this year from Kenya where she was researching and writing her final master's project for Washington Theological Union on Catholic peacebuilding. Mary also began service on July 1 as a chaplain-in-residence at Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

## Plans for the 2013 LCWR Think Tank Taking Shape

Anthony J. Gittins, CSSp will guide participants in reflection on "Discipleship: Faithful to the Mission in Uncertain Times" during the 2013 LCWR Think Tank, February 11-14 at the Redemptorist Renewal Center ([www.desertrenewal.org](http://www.desertrenewal.org)) in Tucson, Arizona. Registration for the symposium will begin in September.

Father Gittins is currently professor of mission and culture at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago where he brings together learnings from cultural anthropology and theology. He has taught and worked in 35 countries. His pastoral outreach includes ministry in cultures from Africa to the Pacific, and work with Chicago's disenfranchised. His commitment to homeless women in Chicago, whose stories he told in *Where There's Hope, There's Life: Women's Stories of Homelessness and Survival*, is ongoing. He is the author of 15 books and numerous articles.

## Catholic Health Association Explores Leadership for Healing

Mary Hughes, OP, past-president of LCWR, and Ann Scholz, SSND, associate director for social mission, represented LCWR at the annual assembly of the Catholic Health Association (CHA) June 2-3 in Philadelphia ([www.chausa.org/Assembly\\_Main.aspx](http://www.chausa.org/Assembly_Main.aspx)). The assembly, which attracted healthcare professionals from across the United States and around the world, focused on "Leadership for Healing."

Keynote speakers included author and corporate advisor Dov Seidman who offered insights on why the most principled businesses are the most profitable and sustainable. Jeffrey Brenner, MD, a family physician who has worked in Camden, New Jersey for the past 12 years, described his efforts to ensure that all families who live in urban, underserved communities receive high quality, culturally competent, personalized family health care. Dr. Carolyn Y. Woo, president of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), shared how her life's journey from her education by the Maryknoll Sisters in Hong Kong to her academic research on innovation and organizational systems prepared her to lead the international aid agency. Finally, syndicated columnists E.J. Dionne and Ramesh Ponnuru provided interesting commentary on the current political climate and demonstrated civil discourse at its best.

Kathleen Popko, SP, president of the Sisters of Providence, Holyoke, Massachusetts, and Msgr. Charles J. Fahey, the Marie Ward Doty Professor of Aging Studies (emeritus), at Fordham University received Lifetime Achievement Awards from CHA. The award is conferred each year upon acknowledged leaders of the health ministry who have inspired and mentored others and whose leadership extends beyond the Catholic health ministry to influence and impact the community.

CHA also rolled out a new video highlighting the benefits of the Affordable Care Act. The video featured individuals, families, and small business owners who have obtained health security as a result of the law. The video reminds the ministry and the nation about why CHA worked so hard to pass meaningful health reform. The health reform video is available on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pEJep46X7I&feature=plcp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pEJep46X7I&feature=plcp)).



## Conference Brings Together Variety Stakeholders

The June 1–3, 2012 conference, “Haiti: One Table Many Partners,” hosted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Washington, DC brought together US and Haitian church leaders involved in parish partnerships, evangelization, church reconstruction, and sustainable development. In addition to a number of keynote speakers, the conference featured workshops on partnership projects in areas such as catechesis, reconstruction, education, and development projects which explored best practices in building partnerships across cultures.

LCWR and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) used the opportunity to meet with their counterparts from the Haitian Conference of Religious (CHR). Representatives of the conferences discussed common concerns and possible partnerships to meet some of the challenges facing the Haitian conference. The three conferences committed to continuing their conversations and to explore continued collaboration.

The partnership conference also provided a forum for Haitian religious, Paulin Innocent, CSSp, president of the Conference of Haitian Religious, and Kesta Occident, CSC, superior general of the Sisters of Holy Cross of Canada, to share the reality, challenges, and hopes for religious in Haiti with members of religious institutes from the United States.

Attendees learned about the vibrant and growing religious congregations in Haiti. Of the 99 congregations currently ministering in Haiti, 18 are indigenous congregations. Their ministries include work in health-care, education, and ecological development. Sr. Kesta and Fr. Paulin agreed that the education and formation of young religious is one of the most serious challenges facing the conference. They hope to develop a multi-disciplinary program to provide theological formation, leadership training, and management skills for religious sisters, brothers, and priests in Haiti. In addition, they identified a number of other priorities including creating a unified Catholic school system; building a multipurpose center for CHR; and exploring ways for Haitian religious communities to become financially self-sustaining.

Their US counterparts recounted lessons learned from ongoing partnerships and suggested best practices for religious interested in developing relationships with Haitian congregations. Many were enthusiastic about the blessings that partnership offers, while they acknowledged the pitfalls inherent in such ventures. Those with experience counseled those interested in twinning to build their own crosscultural skills, develop relationships of mutuality, and to seek out those who have developed “best practices.”



LCWR took action on a number of issues in the public square.

- LCWR president Pat Farrell, OSF signed a letter from faith leaders asking the two presidential candidates to publicly, consistently, and systematically address what each proposes to do to provide help and opportunity for people in the United States and around the world who are hungry and living in poverty.
- Janet Mock, CSJ, executive director of LCWR, co-signed a letter to members of the House Appropriations Committee expressing serious concern over cuts to the International Food Aid accounts in the 2013 Agriculture Appropriations which would eliminate funding that feeds and supports approximately 8.5 million vulnerable people around the globe and severely weakens funding for programs that fight long-term hunger and build the capacity of people to withstand food emergencies.
- LCWR endorsed a statement urging the US government to adopt the Principles for Public Private Partnerships in Food Security: do no harm to other public investments; respect the dignity of the human person; provide measurable benefits to small-holders; ensure sustainability; provide transparency and mechanisms for ongoing civil society participation; and protect and prioritize local private sector actors.

## 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

## Smithsonian Presents *Sisters of Selma*

The Smithsonian Annual Ethics Education Series will feature the international film premiere of the Hart Films/PBS documentary, *Sisters of Selma: Bearing Witness for Change*.

This documentary presents the powerful story of the Roman Catholic sisters who burst through the social restrictions of their times to march in nonviolent protest in Selma, Alabama, right after the horrific events of Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965. The film, which will be followed by a distinguished faculty panel discussion, includes original clips along with interviews with the sisters.

The event will be held on Tuesday, September 11, 2012, from 1:00 to 4:30 PM at the Baird Auditorium, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, 10th and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC. The program is free and open to the public. Registration for the event is required. Please register at: [bit.ly/Lj1NXj](http://bit.ly/Lj1NXj)

## President Obama Offers Reprieve to America's DREAMers

Speaking from the Rose Garden on June 15, President Obama addressed a new policy from the Department of Homeland Security aimed at mending the nation's immigration policy, to make it more fair, more efficient, and more just; specifically for certain young people sometimes called "Dreamers."

The President said, "Effective immediately, the Department of Homeland Security is taking steps to lift the shadow of deportation from these young people. Over the next few months, eligible individuals who do not present a risk to national security or public safety will be able to request temporary relief from deportation proceedings and apply for work authorization."

This does not provide a permanent fix for the estimated 800,000 to 1,000,000 undocumented immigrant youth who grew up in the United States, but it is a step forward. Only legislative action in the form of the Dream Act can provide the path to citizenship that will enable these young people to achieve the dream they seek—an education and the opportunity to contribute to this country.

## 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 [lcwr.org/members/lcwr-membership-information](http://lcwr.org/members/lcwr-membership-information).