

December 2018



LCWR Past President Address USCCB General Assembly

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) invited LCWR past president Teresa Maya, CCVI to address the entire body of bishops at its spiritual discernment day on Monday, November 12.

This year the USCCB changed the agenda of their annual assembly in light of the clergy sexual abuse situation. Knowing that true discernment begins by listening, the bishops planned a day of discernment and prayer that will provide opportunities for them to listen to the tradition of the Church, as well as to the people. To that end, they conducted their day of prayer as an experience of *lectio divina*. Readings from the tradition of the Church were followed by reflections from two abuse survivors who addressed the bishops from their personal experiences, a young mother who spoke about the responsibility of the Church to future generations, and Tere, who had 15 minutes to address the bishops. Her remarks followed the last reading of the day which was from Charles Borromeo.

The text of Tere's remarks is available on the LCWR website. The video may be viewed online as well.

LCWR Begins Emergent Planning Process

Following the LCWR needs assessment conducted earlier in 2018 and discussed at the LCWR assembly, the LCWR national board authorized at its August meeting the start of a follow-up emergent planning process. The process builds upon the qualitative research conducted at the spring regional meetings, as well as the quantitative research conducted through an online survey completed by members. The board invited LCWR president-elect Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ; members Michelle Marie Stachowiak, FFS; Rosalia Meza, FMDV;; Judith Donovan, CSJ; and Mary Jo Nelson, OLVN; as well as executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ to serve as the planning process design team.

The planning process is being facilitated by Donna Fyffe, the founder of CommunityWorks, Inc. Donna's

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We'll Soon Be On Our Way!

LCWR is tentatively scheduled to move its offices on Saturday, December 8.

The new address will be:

LCWR
8737 Colesville Road, Suite 610
Silver Spring, MD 20910



Telephone number
will stay the same

From the LCWR Presidency

Living the Questions

Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ — LCWR President-Elect

Living the questions. It is what I find myself doing these days. No matter if I'm attending a regional LCWR meeting or LCWR board meeting, being an observer at the US-CCB assembly, or engaging in dialogue with sisters in my own congregation, questions abound. Questions about our "life" as women religious, questions about nationalism, racism, polarization, climate change, immigration and migration, just to name a few, occupy my prayers, thoughts, conversations, and dreams.



In times like these, I find myself seeking solitude to quiet the gale-force winds that swirl about, turning gently to God who holds all. In coming to the quiet I can slow the pace, allow the faces of the women, children, and men coming from Honduras, to float into my consciousness. These images are juxtaposed with the images of barbed wire and troops at our border. My inner quiet is touched by the dusty, gritty determination of the people seeking refuge, a new home -- safety.

Images and voices of men, women, and children who have been abused by those within our church gently come to mind in the stillness of my solitude. Their voices and faces haunt me as my heart breaks for the injustice of it all. At the same time, I sense an undercurrent of strength from the people so often seen as marginalized or voiceless. These brothers and sisters are not voiceless. Is it not our own inability to listen and respond that has contributed to the structural sin within our beloved church, country, world? Are these men,

women, and children not the teachers and prophets of today? And like the prophets of old, their lives are filled with painful stories that we all need to hear, receive, embrace, and invite into our own hearts and consciousness. This will enable us to become brother and sister to one another, letting go of all that binds us to inaction and paralysis. It is in seeing the "other" as "we" where the divine touches the best of our humanity.

The quietness within enables us to create the inner space needed to be leaders in these turbulent times. Without the gentle and not so subtle nudges of the Spirit, we can find ourselves caught into all that leads away from the "life" God has invited us to as women religious. Indeed, are not all the faithful, through baptism, called to be brother and sister to one another, in prayer, thought, word, and deed?

Over these first three months as president-elect of LCWR, I've had the opportunity to engage in deep conversations with members of LCWR, CMSWR, CMSM, men and women of our church, and some members of the USCCB. These experiences continue to till the soil of hope and inspiration within my own heart. There is so much that unites us as men and women of faith, men and women who continue to walk into an emergent future that is just beyond our imaginings. Let us walk this journey with renewed faith, courage, and joy, embracing all that we are to be and do, in this our moment in time.

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The quietness within enables us to create the inner space needed to be leaders in these turbulent times.

Looking Toward the Future Collaboratively

By Carol Zinn, SSJ, LCWR Executive Director

Typically, the first two weeks of November find LCWR present in various configurations of meetings with multiple organizations who share in the mission of the Gospel and the charisms of religious life. This November offered many opportunities for gathering with others as we have in the past. And we also had some opportunities for new initiatives as well as an unprecedented venue for the presence and voice of LCWR. Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center in Marriottsville, Maryland provided both hospitality and venue for several of these meetings.

LCWR National Board

The LCWR board and national office ministers met on November 6 to further the work of LCWR. In particular, this group engaged in a process that looked at the work of the design team of the LCWR emergent planning process. They met with Donna Fyffe, the emergent planning facilitator, who presented a plan for the ways in which the process will move forward.

On November 7 the board continued the work of discerning its governance role as LCWR moves through this time of transition of its internal structures. The board focused on how it will create meaningful and mutual relationships with LCWR regions, the national office, and executive director. Mindful that it is in the first year of the three-year governance experimentation, the board spent time deepening its sense of how to best serve the members of LCWR during this time within the evolution of religious life.



LCWR national board and staff meet in Marriottsville



The executive committees of CMSM, CMSWR, and LCWR at Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center

Joint Conference Meeting

November 8 found LCWR ready to participate in a joint executive committee meeting with CMSM (Conference of Major Superiors of Men). Historically LCWR and CMSM meet twice a year. This year Sharlet Wagner, CSC; Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ; Teresa Maya, CCVI; Susan Durkin, OSU; Yesenia Fernandez, MGSpS; Theresa Sandok, OSM; and I welcomed our CMSM brothers Mark Padrez, OP; Patrick Sean Moffett, CFC; Tim Kesicki, SJ; Larry Schatz, FSC; and John Pavlik, OFM Cap; and,

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LCWR Begins Emergent Planning Process

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expertise resides in community building, leadership development, and process design for furthering a client's mission and initiatives.

The planning process follows Theory U and calls for the involvement of multiple persons, experiences, voices, and perspectives. All of this serves the purpose of discerning the next iteration of LCWR as it responds to the needs of leaders into the first-half of the 21st century. Between now and the February meeting of the LCWR board, the design team will host several conversations with various people to garner a sense of how religious life is perceived by those within and outside of LCWR. This information will form the basis for an in-person meeting with the board and national office ministers at the February meeting. Theory U demands both the grounded commitment to deep listening and the flexible methodology needed for discernment and creativity.

Looking Toward the Future Collaboratively

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for the first time, sisters from the Conference of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR) executive committee: Mother Mary McGreavy, RSM, chairperson; Sister Mary Elizabeth Wusinich, SV, assistant chairperson; and Sister Mary Christine Cremin, RSM, executive director.



CMSWR and LCWR officers enjoy lunch together

The CMSM/CMSWR/LCWR joint executive committee meeting provided time for prayer; theological reflection on the topics of mistrust of national and international institutions; the polarization of people, cultures, religions; and the secularization of society; conversation about how the women and men religious of the United States might work together; celebration of liturgy; and time for relationship-building over lunch and social time. This initial gathering was a moment of grace and energy for the conferences and for religious life in our country. We look forward to ongoing efforts to deepen relationships in service of the Gospel.

Sharlet, Jayne, Teresa, Theresa and I represented LCWR at the Commission on Religious Life and Ministry on November 9. This commission is the USCCB's official link with the conferences of religious life and it includes the executive director of the USCCB Office of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations; the president of the National Conference of Vicars of Religious; and the executive director of the National Religious Retirement Office. The focus of this commission is the issues and insights facing religious relative to both the life and ministry. Cardinal Joseph Tobin represents the USCCB on the commission. The anticipation of the document, *Mutuae Relationes*, provides this commission the op-

portunity to deepen the essential elements of ecclesial communion: the hierarchical and mystical dimensions of the church.

As executive director, I participated in the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations on November 10. This committee brings together the executive directors of the organizations related to clergy, consecrated life, and vocations in the US Catholic Church. This year's meeting focused on a dialogue on the impact of science/technology on the development of faith among young people. The fruit of this dialogue made clear the ongoing need for conversation about this topic and how the challenges can be embraced in ways that respond to the needs of young people. Cardinal Tobin serves as the chairperson of this committee. His presence and perceptions offered warmth and depth to this meeting.

The 2018 USCCB general assembly received quite a bit of media attention because of the agenda focus on the sexual abuse and scandal crisis. The somber and sobering topic generated a tone equal to the level of crisis unfolding in the US Catholic Church. The pain of this moment was palpable throughout the meetings and the engagement of the bishops in honest, vulnerable, heartfelt, and heartbroken conversations resonated with the depth of the crisis. Observing the bishops embrace the scope of the crisis and the felt expectation for them to move beyond prayer and apology for all that created this crisis touched the hearts of all.

Because of the crisis, the bishops began this general assembly with a day of prayer and spiritual discernment. We were humbled and honored to have LCWR's past president, Teresa Maya, be one of four voices offering a

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On a free day, the LCWR officers attended liturgy at the Baltimore Carmel and visited with some of the nuns

Looking Toward the Future Collaboratively

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reflection to our brother bishops. The experience of sitting in the room as Tere spoke was a grace for Sharlet, Jayne, and me. In the name of all of our members, Tere's message invited a depth of personal and communal discernment that matched the depth of the suffering and tragedy of the current crisis.

LCWR leadership enjoyed a luncheon with our CMSWR sisters during the USCCB general assembly on November 13. The building of relationships that happens around a table and shared meal speaks to the inherent human desire for connection. As we continue to strengthen our relationships with our sisters, the presence of joy, mutual respect, and love for one another becomes more tangible.

The November meetings are truly the work of LCWR: developing and strengthening relationships among ourselves, furthering the work of the board and national office, connecting with organizations that serve religious life, broadening the sense of vocation, participating in the life of the church on a national level, and attending to the movements of the Spirit whose power to transform all of us is beyond anything we can ask or imagine.



The LCWR presidency at the USCCB general assembly in Baltimore: Sharlet Wagner, CSC; Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ; and Teresa Maya, CCVI

Order Additional Copies of Upcoming Occasional Papers by December 7



A Force for Good: Activating Compassion

The Winter 2019 issue of *Occasional Papers* focuses on the urgent need to activate compassion in the world as a force for good. With the belief that compassion is essential for the healing of our personal and collective wounds, this issue demonstrates the power that the intentional practice of compassion holds. Writers explore how compassion can be a force for good and an antidote to violence, and how it is an essential part of leadership today. Included in this issue will be:

- Reflections by leaders on the place of compassion as they led through an experience of crisis in their communities
- An interview with writer **Joyce Rupp** on the possibilities that arise from living and leading from a stance of compassion
- An interview with theologian **John Haught** on how the concept of an unfinished universe impacts our understandings of suffering and compassion
- How Theory U and “presencing” can increase our capacity to live compassionately
- The use of social media to increase compassion in ourselves and in the world
- The need for training in love as an antidote to violence and abuse
- Forming religious life leaders for a future that will require compassionate love

Orders for this issue of *Occasional Papers* must be received by **Friday, December 7**. Contact Carol Glidden at cglidden@lwr.org with any questions.

Opportunities for Leaders

The Leading From Within Retreat

There are a few remaining places available for members who wish to participate in the 2019 Leading from Within Retreat which will take place **February 10 -15, 2019** at the Bethany Center Retreat House in Lutz, Florida. Members who have made the retreat have found the experience deeply helpful in grounding and enhancing their ministry of elected leadership. Leaders who would like to participate in the [2019 retreat experience](#) need to register by **December 1**.



Bethany Center Retreat House

Practicing Leadership: How to Embrace and Vital and Vibrant Future

Registration for the [March 4 – 6, 2019](#) offering of this pilot workshop is now open. The workshop will be held at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center in Marriottsville, Maryland. Registration is limited to the first 50 members who apply. The deadline for registration in January 25, 2019.

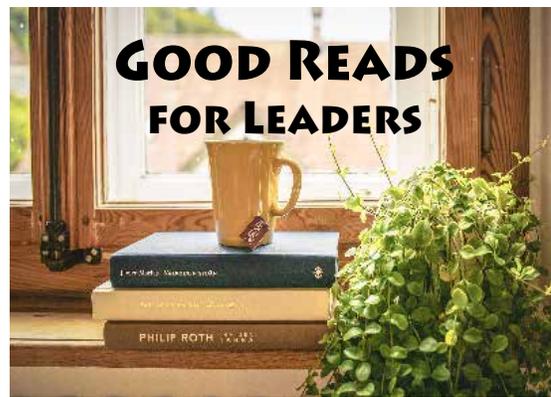


Looking for a Christmas Gift?

Consider a gift subscription to *Occasional Papers*

One-year gift subscriptions are available for only \$15.00 (or \$30.00 for outside of the United States).

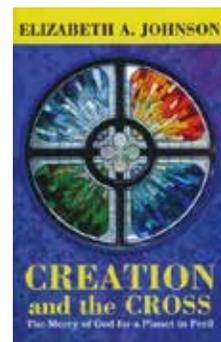
[More information is available on the LCWR website.](#)



Creation and the Cross: The Mercy of God for a Planet in Peril By Elizabeth A. Johnson, CSJ -- 2018

Recommended by Pat Cormack, SCSC

When I heard about this new book by Elizabeth Johnson, I was eager to read it. This book is for any who struggle with an understanding of redemption and how it might bear on our growing appreciation for cosmology.



It is very different in style from other works by Beth Johnson, no less scholarly but more accessible. Her purpose is “to engage people in conversation about a central Christian belief in God who saves and how this belief affects life and practice at our crucial ecological juncture.” The format adopts the methodology used by St. Anselm in his treatise on redemption, *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God Became Human).

Creation and the Cross is a conversation that begins with Anselm’s satisfaction theory: “Jesus’ death paid back what was due to God because of the sins of human beings.” The conversation moves to Beth Johnson’s alternative vision: accompaniment theology. Using a wide range of scriptural sources she explores what it means that God actively accompanies the world with everlasting and overflowing mercy throughout the world’s evolution, history, sinfulness, suffering, and death. Anselm’s vision of redemption has permeated much of theology in the last 1000 years. Beth’s vision enables us to take a fresh look at the mercy of God for our world. Her book is challenging and inspiring and I encourage you to take it up for your own reflection.

Standing Against Racism Resource Sharing Column

America's Original Sin

By Jim Wallis

Recommended by Gemma Doll, OP

This book is a personal and provocative reflection of a pastor's grappling with the insidious clutches white privilege and implicit bias have on one's spirituality and human freedom. We all can repent the sin of racism, but we are left powerless to change social habits of treating people differently, based on skin color. Let us look deeply into our inner selves and our behavior to glimpse Truth, the Truth that will set us free. Jim Wallis names the sin and the costly path of conversion. Through historical events and his own theologizing, he paints a possible new America, a beloved community and he reminds us that as Christians, we must never give up.

LCWR members are invited to share insights and suggestions for action on the [LCWR Resource Sharing Forum](#).



Nationwide Events to #EndGunViolence Planned

December 14 marks the 6-year anniversary of the Sandy Hook tragedy. An estimated 600,000 Americans have been killed or injured by guns since 20 children and six educators lost their lives at Sandy Hook elementary school in 2012. Communities around the country continue to organize to shine a light on the devastating epidemic of gun violence in this nation. Their message is simple: Congress must take meaningful action to reduce gun deaths and injuries — now.

During December the gun violence prevention community will host vigils to #EndGunViolence in all 50 states. Local organizers can download the [2018 National Vigil Toolkit](#) and register their events [here](#). The annual national vigil service of mourning and loving remembrance for all who have fallen victim to the ongoing epidemic of gun violence in America is scheduled for December 5, at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Washington, DC.

EMERGING QUESTIONS FOR
REFLECTION AND CONVERSATION

What is it that we know
that we act as if we don't know?

Is Your Leadership Term About to End?

If your leadership term is ending this month, we ask you to submit a change of leadership form found in the [LCWR Members' Information section](#) (password-protected) of the website.

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USCSAHT Host Talitha Kum Hemispheric Meeting

US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking hosted the first-ever meeting of representatives of Talitha Kum networks in the western hemisphere October 24-27 in Cleveland. The theme of the meeting, "Borders Are Not Barriers," reflected the desire of the national and regional networks to work together to eradicate human trafficking and meet the needs of survivors.



Eight networks from Canada to Argentina were represented: CATHII (Canada); Red Rahamin (Mexico); Red Rama (Central America and Caribbean nations); Red Republica Dominicana (Dominican Republic); Red Tamar (Venezuela and Colombia); Red Kawsay (Andean countries in South America); Um Grito Pela Vida (Brazil); and USCSAHT.

Gabriella Bottani, CMS, director of Talitha Kum, the international network of consecrated life against trafficking in persons, urged those in attendance to forge ties that will multiply their efforts, to share best practices, and to give witness to the commitment of the church to end modern-day slavery. Guests included representatives of the church and foundations. Sharlet Wagner, CSC, president of LCWR participated in the meeting and Bishop Nelson Perez of Cleveland joined the group for liturgy.

During the meeting, participants heard from two survivors of human trafficking and shared information about the work of their local networks including their successes and challenges. Organizers were also able to offer virtual tours of some US-based, sister-led programs. In addition to the serious work of hemispheric-wide relationship building, the group identified a number of possible points of future collaboration.

USCSAHT is a membership network of congregations of women religious, coalitions working against human trafficking in which women religious participate, and individuals working to end human trafficking.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

Leading from Within Retreat

*Bethany Retreat Center
Lutz, Florida*

February 10 – 15, 2019

LCWR Practicing Leadership: How to Embrace a Vital and Vibrant Future Workshop

*Bon Secours Retreat & Conference Center
Marriottsville, MD*

March 4 — 6, 2019

LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois*

April 4 — 7, 2019

LCWR Assembly

Scottsdale, Arizona

August 13 — 17, 2019

LCWR Practicing Leadership: How to Embrace a Vital and Vibrant Future Workshop

*Location to be Determined
September 17 — 19, 2019*

Leading from Within Retreat

*Redemptorist Renewal Center
Tucson, Arizona*

January 12 – 17, 2020

LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois*

March 26 — 29, 2020

Imagining Justice

*Bon Secours Retreat & Conference Center
Marriottsville, MD*

April 20 – 23, 2020

LCWR Assembly

Dallas, Texas

August 11 — 15, 2020

People of Faith Push Back Against Administration's Immigration Policy

The Trump administration has doubled down on its efforts to punish migrants and limit legal immigration. The president has promised to turn away thousands of Central Americans fleeing violence and pledged to block their access to legal refuge. The right of migrants to seek asylum is protected by both domestic and international law. In addition, the administration has proposed regulations that would result in the indefinite incarceration of children and immigrant families and limit the ability of those lawfully present in the United States to adjust their status. LCWR and other immigrant allies are fighting back.



In a [public statement](#) issued October 26, LCWR rejected the president's divisive rhetoric and fear mongering and called for the just treatment of asylum seekers. "LCWR is deeply troubled by President Trump's continued denigration of those fleeing untenable situations in their home countries . . . We urge the administration to manage refugee arrivals humanely and in a manner that respects their dignity and rights under US and international law."

Tens of thousands of individuals and organizations, including LCWR, have voiced their objections to the Trump administration's proposed regulation that would discard the 1997 [Flores Settlement Agreement](#) safeguards which protect the welfare of migrant children in US government custody in favor of dangerously broad criteria that allow indefinite detention, fewer legal protections, and questionable standards of care and oversight. In its comments LCWR urged the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services to reject the proposed regulations or to revise them to ensure that children are protected, and the regulations are consistent with the purpose and spirit of the Flores Agreement.

Finally, LCWR is urging members and colleagues to oppose the Trump administration's attempt to limit immigration and penalize immigrants already in the United States legally by drastically expanding the definition of "public charge," a legal concept used to determine the likelihood that an immigrant will become

dependent on government support. Those deemed likely to become a "public charge" can be denied visas to enter the United States and those lawfully present lose the opportunity to adjust their status and to become lawful permanent residents.

The most effective way to fight back against this proposed change to the public charge rule is to participate in the 60-day public comment period, which ends **December 10**. CLINIC, the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, has developed a [mini-toolkit](#) to help concerned citizens develop and submit comments. [LCWR's statement](#) opposing public charge might also help with the development of comments. Comments can be submitted [here](#).

COP 24 Will Consider Implementing Rules for the Paris Agreement

Government ministers will meet in Katowice, Poland, December 2-14 to try to agree on rules for implementing the 2015 Paris agreement. The historic agreement, which was adopted by almost 200 nations in 2015 and is due to come into force in 2020, sets a goal of limiting global warming to "well below" a rise of 2 degrees C above pre-industrial times while "pursuing efforts" for the tougher goal of 1.5 degrees C.

At [COP24](#) countries will start reviewing their commitments and hammering out the rules and specifics of how the international community moves forward. As United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) executive secretary Patricia Espinosa [has said](#), "COP 21 saw the birth of the Agreement. In Poland, as I call it Paris 2.0, we will put together the pieces, directions and guidelines in order to make the framework really operate."

[Climate Pilgrims](#) are on the road walking from the Vatican to Katowice. These people of faith from around the world, united and inspired by Laudato Si, are walking to show their commitment to climate justice. Supporters are encouraged to join the pilgrims in [prayer](#) for COP24.

COP24 will be the 24th conference of the parties to the UNFCCC, one of three conventions adopted at the "Rio Earth Summit" in 1992. It entered into force on March 21, 1994. Its goal is the prevention of harmful human activities that interfere with the climate system.



- Letter to Secretary of Defense, James N. Mattis urging him to support the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute. LCWR (10/17/18)
LCWR comments in opposition to the proposed rule from the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the Apprehension, Processing, Care, and Custody of Alien Minors and Unaccompanied Alien Children (Docket No. ICEB-2018-0002) LCWR (10/23/18)
- LCWR statement condemning President Trump's demonization of refugees caravanning North and urging the administration to respect the dignity and rights of those seeking asylum in the US LCWR (10/24/18)
- Letter to Congress from faith-based organizations expressing unequivocal support for the caravan of people seeking protection from violence in Central America and categorical opposition to the proposed executive order to ban asylum seekers on the southern border fleeing violence and persecution. LCWR (10/29/18)
- Quote for joint statement on the situation of those seeking asylum in the US Carol Zinn, SSJ (10/30/18)
- LCWR statement condemning anti-Semitic killing at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. LCWR (10/31/18)
- Endorsement of the Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains Act of 2018 to be introduced by Senators Harris and Cornyn. LCWR (10/31/18)
- Letter to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen expressing concern over DHS's implementation of the President's Executive Order 13767 declaring steadfast opposition to the damage a border wall in environmentally-sensitive conservation areas would cause to wildlife and their habitats. LCWR (10/31/18)



Together Program Opens Applications for Fall 2019 Cohort

RFC is pleased to announce that the application period for the *Together* program for next fall's cohort is now open.

Together is a collaborative for theological education, formation, and community, cosponsored by RFC and Catholic Theological Union (CTU). Open to Catholic sisters and brothers who are currently in formation and have completed their canonical novitiate year, participants enroll in a graduate theology program at CTU, share community in a designated space in the residence hall, and participate in ongoing formation together as an inter-congregational, intercultural, and intergenerational cohort.

Virtual Open House in January

On Tuesday, January 22 at 7:00 pm or Thursday, January 24 at 2:00 pm those interested will have the opportunity to speak with Karina Conrad, CDP, *Together* program coordinator, about the program, receive an overview of CTU's academic programs, take a peek at the formation community, and hear from a current participant. [Registration for the open house](#) may be completed online. Individual visits to the campus are possible as well.

March 1 is the CTU merit scholarship application deadline. The *Together* program application deadline is April 8. More information about the *Together* program, including the application, can be accessed at: www.together-formation.com.



The [NRVC 2016-2017 Annual Report](#) is now available online. Throughout the past two years, NRVC saw a growth in the NRVC membership, staff, and board. Members continue to receive excellent programming, services, and resources. As NRVC moves forward, it endeavors to embrace anticipated transitions and growth with grace, compassion, and, above all, hope.

The [NRVC Code of Ethics](#) has been updated and is available online. Leaders are encouraged to share this revised document with their leadership councils and vocation team. Appointed by leadership, vocation ministers are called to be professional ministerial leaders, seeking to offer the highest quality of service possible. Vocation ministers must function from a professional ministerial ethic, which requires them to offer the highest standards of service to all to whom they minister.

The NRVC Board extends an invitation for nominations for the position of NRVC Executive Director by the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, 2018. The executive director advances the mission of NRVC, serves as the official representative of NRVC, leads the staff of the NRVC national office; stewards the NRVC finances; and works effectively with the national board. [The nomination form](#) can be accessed online.

Religious Asked to Support Retirement Fund Appeal

The national Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held **December 8-9** in parishes across the United States. Since 1988, US Catholics have responded to the annual appeal with overwhelming generosity, donating \$844 million. Yet the need remains profound. Of 547 religious institutes providing data to the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO), only 4 percent are adequately funded for retirement.



All religious institutes, whether or not they receive direct financial assistance or benefits from the education and services the collection makes possible, are asked to give the appeal vocal and prayerful support. Visit [our website](#) to download Various resources, including a speaker guide and a [social media toolkit](#), which makes it easy to promote the collection on your institute's social media platforms, are available on the [NRRO website](#). NRRO also asks that religious be sure to thank bishops in dioceses that hold the collection, as well as pray for the success of the collection and the donors whose generosity underwrites all the NRRO's efforts.

News from the UN

December 1--World AIDS Day has become one of the most recognized international health days and a key opportunity to raise awareness, commemorate those who have passed, and celebrate victories, such as increased access to treatment and prevention services.



December 10—International Human Rights Day commemorates the day on which, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights. Disrespect for basic human rights continues to be wide-spread in all parts of the globe. Extremist movements subject people to horrific violence. Messages of intolerance and hatred prey on people's fears. It is time to reaffirm the dignity and rights outlined in the declaration.

December 18—International Day of the Migrants marks the adoption of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their families. There are more than 244 million migrants in the world today. One of every six migrants is under the age of 20. Children also comprise more than half of the world's refugees.

Third National Convocation for Justice Promoters Scheduled for March 2019

The third bi-annual gathering of justice promoters working with congregations of women religious will be held at the Marriott St. Louis Airport Hotel, March 25-27. This year's theme, *Racism: Through the Prism of Social Justice*, invites participants to examine the roots of systemic racism and explore the difficult work of purging ourselves, our communities, and our country of the sin of racism and its destructive effects. Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Patricia Chappell and Anne-Louis Nadeau will keynote the convocation. Both are experienced presenters and workshop leaders specializing in anti-racism work. Patricia serves as executive director, and Anne-Louis as program director, of Pax Christi USA.



by Joan Mumaw, IHM
President
www.solidarityfriends.org

Thanksgiving is only a few days away. It is a time when we all take the opportunity to express our gratitude to family and friends. Friends in Solidarity, on behalf of Solidarity staff in South Sudan, would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and prayers.

In November we will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the work of Solidarity in this war-torn country. We are grateful for the volunteers and supporters who make this work possible including especially our US partners and religious congregations.

As we begin the next decade we continue to be in need of new staff to replace some of those returning to their home countries after many years of service.

We also are in search of part-time staff for the Silver Spring office. If you know of persons in your congregation who would be interested and have the skills for office administration and communications with a focus on social media, please contact me for more information. Good computer skills are needed.

We will be moving with LCWR and RCRI to new offices in early December. Our new address is 8737 Colesville Road, Suite 610, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Advent is rapidly approaching and Friends in Solidarity invites you to use our Advent Journey Calendar. Adult and student editions are available on our website. Alternative gift cards may also be downloaded and folded from the website. Both can be accessed online.

The convocation will open March 25 at 7:00 pm and close March 27 at noon. The registration fee is \$225.00. The convocation rate for rooms at the Marriott St. Louis Airport is \$130.00 plus tax per night. Registration is open to all who serve as justice promoters for women's congregations. Registration information is available at www.jcwr.org.

