



March 2017

## Save the Dates for the 2017 LCWR Assembly

August 8 -- 11, 2017 -- (departure date: August 12)  
Orlando, Florida

Plans are well underway for the 2017 LCWR assembly, including the design of its logo. Artist Mary Southard, CSJ created the design and offers the following commentary: "The yearning God has for us and we for God seems to grow stronger as we experience ourselves in this present time of upheaval and darkness. The painting was inspired by this realization and by words from 2016 the LCWR keynote address by Pat Farrell, OSF: "Our deep longing for Love lures us through refining fire into total surrender to Holy Mystery." As we are being drawn into the Heart of God, into a deeper communion with the Divine and one another (and all creation), we are being transformed by fire, in order that we may be the embodiment of Love for the sake of the world.

"As I painted I was further inspired by *Shekina* — the divine presence expressed in light that breaks into life in hidden ways. It is Shekina who is in-breaking our lives as women religious facing the realities of our



world. Dashes of light began to emerge in the painting where She is drawing us forward and upward into the refining fire, the heart, the communion where we are being transformed into light—into the Presence of Love, and moving as love into our world."

Registration materials will be available in March.

## LCWR Opposes Recent Executive Orders

On January 30, LCWR issued a public statement voicing its deep concern about many of President Trump's recent executive orders on immigration and refugee resettlement. The statement notes that the orders "threaten border communities, force our immigrant community members further into the shadows, and endanger those fleeing violence."

The conference also voiced opposition to the president's executive order calling for the expedited approval of Energy Transfer Partner's request to complete construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) and the revival of the Keystone XL Pipeline. LCWR joined an interfaith group sending a letter to the administration noting that both the Dakota Access and the Keystone XL pipelines will create immense suffering and significantly damage the environment.

## From the LCWR Presidency

# One Stitch at a Time

by Teresa Maya, CCVI — LCWR President-Elect

The rhythm of *abuela's* hands was masterful with a needle. Lately, as I turn away from anxious newscasts or intense social media posts, I find myself wandering back to those quiet evenings with the comforting peace of her sewing. The social fabric that has held our lives is tearing--the principles of citizenship, the values of our democracies, the common good that holds us together. We are experiencing an intensification of the breakdown of the institutions we have known. This has been coming for a while. Why did we think it could happen elsewhere in the world but not here? Yet our hearts know that this time of tearing is also a call to reweaving. When faced with a seemingly impossible sewing project, that had no end in sight, *abuela* would advise, "*un punto a la vez*" (one stitch at a time). Today we must begin anew. We are called to reweave a new social fabric, that can hold everyone that will welcome the stranger... one stitch at a time.

Pope Francis challenged men and women religious in [his homily on the Feast of the Presentation](#) to prophesy with what originally set our hearts afire. He warned against the mentality of survival which "makes us reactionaries, fearful, slowly and silently shutting ourselves up in our houses and in our own preconceived notions." There are lessons to be learned from countries that have experienced the tearing of their social fabric before the United States. Fearful and overwhelmed people there have the temptation to stay at home, to withdraw into clans of friends and family, to mistrust those who are different. Defeated and endangered, many are often left with no option but to migrate. And yet, in all those



places, brave men and women call us to claim the streets, our neighborhoods our common human endeavor. The social fabric is being recreated everywhere one stitch at a time- in a block party, being a kindly neighbor, with a clean street, when we plant trees, fixing a playground, or planting a city garden. This going forth, reaching out, listening, engaging, befriending, is part of the DNA of all our religious communities. Evangelization is that simple, one stitch at a time we witness to Jesus' hope of the Reign of God which called us to be a community with a mission. The apparent simplicity should not fool us -- all big things start local, one stitch at a time.

We have known for a while that we are called to a time of great transformation. Perhaps as congregational leaders we have been distracted with its practical implications within our communities -- planning, visioning, or reconfiguring. The timeliness of our deinstitutionalizing is providential, because now we are free to "stitch" again. Older and fewer we can now collaborate, share, welcome, encourage, and witness. The purpose is gently emerging.

As we enter the season of Lent we need to call one another to notice and resist the temptation of survival that, like Pope Francis warns, "looks for shortcuts in

order to evade the challenges knocking on our doors today." We must encourage one another to start with one stitch and maintain the masterful rhythm that will create the social fabric that can hold the beautiful diversity God called us to be.



## LCWR Members Engage in Leading From Within Retreat

On January 15, 2017, 28 LCWR members arrived at Bethany Center in Lutz, FL for the annual Leading From Within Retreat. Surrounded by the natural beauty of the center, blessed with beautiful weather, and guided by Janet Mock, CSJ; Annmarie Sanders, IHM; and Marie McCarthy, SP, the participants had the opportunity to enter into deep quiet. The rhythm of the days brought the participants together in the morning for prayer, ritual and input, and in the evening for an extended ritual gathering the graces of each day.

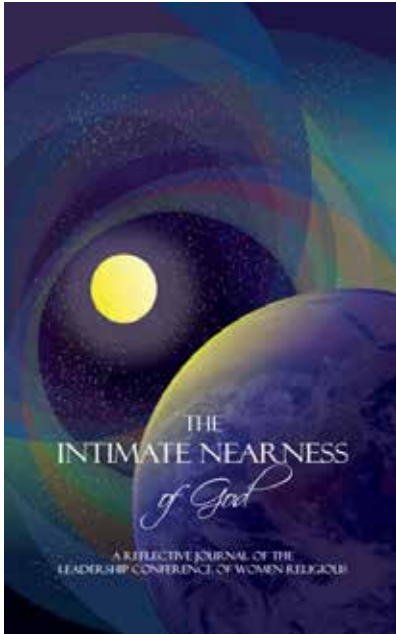
Day one focused on “Accessing the Wisdom of the Great Deep.” The following days focused on, “Daring to Desire,” “The Path of Transformation,” “The Courage to say ‘Yes’ to the Activity of God,” and “Living in Joyful Hope.” In the final ritual participants named the particular grace that they wished to carry with them from the retreat. Evaluations indicated that this was a richly blessed experience for all who participated.



### Materials for 2017 New Leader Workshop

All 2017 New Leader Workshop participants have received log-in information for materials that are available online on topics including canon and civil law, team-building, and working with congregation members. Participants are encouraged to work with the materials in advance of the workshop.

## LCWR Offers The Intimate Nearness of God a New Reflection Journal Orders Due by March 10



LCWR presents a new book, *The Intimate Nearness of God: A Reflective Journal Exploring Contemplation and Transformation*. The phrase, “intimate nearness of God,” comes from the keynote address by Pat Farrell, OSF at the 2016 LCWR assembly where she spoke of the contemplative impulse that has been stirring in and among women religious for some time. She noted that this contemplative focus is positioning religious to respond to a future impossible to anticipate. She posited that “we are being led in this direction for the sake of the church and the world.”

*The Intimate Nearness of God* is a collection of reflections written by 30 LCWR members about how they are reclaiming and deepening the contemplative dimensions of their lives and how this focus is leading them to an even fuller embodiment of love. They consider questions such as:

- How are you sensing that your own efforts to pray and live from a contemplative space are making you more open and available to the needs of the world and those you serve?

- How have you experienced a yearning for God, a stretching toward Love? How have you responded to that yearning? Where has that yearning led you?
- How has living and leading from a more contemplative place affected your relationships – with the world, with others, with the Divine, with yourself?

Artwork by Catholic sisters, as well as questions and suggestions for deepening the readers’s own prayer, accompany the reflections.

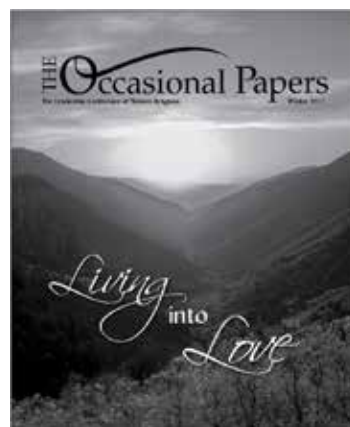
The cost of each book is \$6.00, plus shipping and handling. Discounted prices are available for orders larger than 10 copies.

Orders may be placed online at [lcwr.org/item/intimate-nearness-god-daily-reflection-book](http://lcwr.org/item/intimate-nearness-god-daily-reflection-book). Although LCWR members, associates and subscribers will receive their own copies of the book, many leaders purchase additional copies for their members, associates, staffs, boards, benefactors, and friends. Some also sell the books in their motherhouse and retreat center gift shops.

LCWR will print only the amount of copies that are pre-ordered. Orders must be received with payment by **March 10, 2017**. Revenue from this LCWR project helps defray the costs of the resources and programs the conference provides its members.

Questions about orders may be directed to LCWR’s administrative assistant, Carol Glidden, at [cglidden@lcwr.org](mailto:cglidden@lcwr.org) or at 301-588-4955.

## Order Additional Copies of Winter 2017 Occasional Papers



A limited number of copies of the Winter 2017 edition of *Occasional Papers* may be purchased at [lcwr.org/item/winter-2017](http://lcwr.org/item/winter-2017).

## French Translation of Occasional Papers Available

*"The Transforming Power of Contemplative Engagement,"* an article by Catherine Bertrand, SSND published in the Summer 2016 *Occasional Papers* is now available in French at [tinyurl.com/jxhwzs5](http://tinyurl.com/jxhwzs5). LCWR thanks the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Anne of Quebec for sharing this translation.

A number of translations of articles that have been published in *Occasional Papers* are available on the LCWR website at [lcsr.org/articles-pertinent-religious-life](http://lcsr.org/articles-pertinent-religious-life), due to the generosity of several communities. Any community that has translated other *Occasional Papers* articles is encouraged to consider sharing the translation with LCWR so that they can be made available to its members. Translations may be sent to Annmarie Sanders, IHM at [asanders@lcsr.org](mailto:asanders@lcsr.org).



## LCWR Contemplative Insight Greeting Cards

LCWR has produced a set of 10 greeting cards based on the insights of its members that were voiced at the 2016 LCWR assembly.

Priced at just \$10.00 for the set of 10, these folded cards make great gifts and are a means of sharing ideas about contemplation, communion, and Gospel-centered living. All proceeds from the sale of cards go toward supporting the work and mission of LCWR.

The insights on the cards (which are blank inside) came from the two sessions held during the LCWR assembly where members processed with one another the key-note addresses of author Margaret Wheatley and LCWR past-president Pat Farrell, OSF.

Cards may be purchased online at [lcsr.org/item/contemplative-greeting-cards](http://lcsr.org/item/contemplative-greeting-cards). For more information, contact Carol Glidden at [cglidden@lcsr.org](mailto:cglidden@lcsr.org).



*Participants at the 2016 LCWR assembly processed their experience in deepening groups where they had the opportunity to engage in contemplative dialogue. Important insights arose from those dialogues which were collected and shared briefly during the assembly.*

*Throughout the year, LCWR is sharing some of these insights in various ways so that all members may utilize these thoughts and ideas for their own reflection. Individuals may wish to spend time with the insights personally, and leadership teams may want to consider them communally.*

## Embracing the Mystery: Living Transformation

- Religious life is being called from a culture of doing to a culture of being.
- Can we commit to creating space in our own and the community's life to be the tipping point for transformation?
- As leaders, we intentionally choose a contemplative life stance so we may be the containers for what really matters.



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## Upcoming LCWR Dates

### LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center  
University of St. Mary of the Lake  
Mundelein, Illinois  
March 30 — April 2, 2017*

### LCWR Assembly

*Orlando, Florida  
August 8 — 12, 2017*

### Leading from Within Retreat

*Redemptorist Renewal Center  
Tucson, Arizona  
January 14 – 19, 2018*

### Imagining Justice Workshop

*Redemptorist Renewal Center  
Tucson, Arizona  
March 12 – 18, 2018*

### LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center  
University of St. Mary of the Lake  
Mundelein, Illinois  
April 12 — 15, 2018*

### LCWR Assembly

*St. Louis, Missouri  
August 7— 11, 2018*

### LCWR Assembly

*Scottsdale, Arizona  
August 13 — 17, 2019*

## Women Religious Among the Millions of Marching Women

Women around the country and across the world took to the streets on January 21 in an unprecedented demonstration on behalf



of human rights and equality. The Women’s March in Washington was accompanied by more than 600 “sister marches” in 81 countries, on all seven continents and broke records with reports of nearly five million people participating worldwide.

In Washington, women religious gathered at the Stuart Center on the eve of the march to pray, share supper, and participate in a refresher course in nonviolence. The group was joined by still more marchers the next morning for mass at St. Peter’s Church on Capitol Hill. From there they headed out to join the throngs of women, men, and their children making their way to the Mall to join the singing, chanting, and marches that broke out in all directions.

The marchers represented a wide range of political causes often clearly identified by the signs they carried and the chants that left some hoarse. However, what was also clear to many was the intersectionality of the various causes and the shared commitment of many marchers to justice for women, families, immigrants, and refugees; support for human rights, healthcare, and environmental protections; and a commitment to nonviolence.

The DC marchers were overwhelmingly peaceful and incredibly polite. Signs and chants were positive, peaceful, inspirational, and even humorous: “Refugees Welcome,” “Build Bridges, Not Walls,” and “Make America Think Again” among them.

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



- Letter from the Catholic community to President Trump welcoming the opportunity to work with the new administration to promote the common good and asking that the dignity of all life, a strong commitment to a just peace, and care for our common home hold a central focus for his administration. Mary Pellegrino, CSJ (1/18/17)
- An open letter to President-elect Trump from the presidents of LCWR and CMSM urging him to pledge his leadership toward building a truly good and just society. Mary Pellegrino, CSJ and Brian Terry, SA (1/18/17)
- An open letter from Catholic leaders to President Trump offering help to build bridges and knock down walls of indifference and exclusion and promising to challenge the President as fellow Christians committed to defending those whom Christ put at the center of the Gospel. Mary Pellegrino, CSJ (1/26/17)
- An open, interfaith letter expressing deep concern over the Administration's memorandum calling for the expedited approval of Energy Transfer Partner's request to complete construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. LCWR (1/27/17)
- LCWR statement voicing deep concern about many of President Trump's recent executive orders that deal with the border, travel, interior enforcement, and refugee resettlement. (1/30/17)
- Support for the Freedom of Religion Act of 2017, a bill introduced by Representative Donald S. Beyer Jr. (VA-08), which would prohibit denial of admission, entry, or any other benefit to an alien because of religion. LCWR (1/31/17)

## Senators Reintroduce Bi-partisan BRIDGE Act to Protect DREAMers

US Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) reintroduced bipartisan legislation to protect undocumented young people brought to the United States as children should the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program be discontinued under the Trump Administration. The Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act (S 128), which was first introduced in the Senate late last year, would provide temporary relief from deportation and work authorization to undocumented youth. US Representatives Mike Coffman (CO-06) and Luis V. Gutiérrez (IL-04) introduced companion legislation in the House of Representatives (HR 496).

The BRIDGE Act would provide “provisional protected presence” and employment authorization to DACA-eligible individuals for three years after the date of enactment of the legislation while Congress seeks a permanent solution. A current DACA recipient would receive provisional protected presence until the expiration date of his or her DACA status and could apply for provisional protected presence prior to that expiration. An individual who is not a DACA recipient but who is eligible for DACA could also apply for provisional protected presence.

The act has broad support from the faith, business, higher-education, civil rights, and immigrant communities. More information about the BRIDGE Act can be found at: [tinyurl.com/zeeau2v](http://tinyurl.com/zeeau2v).



## News from the UN

### March 8—International Women's Day

International Women's Day, March 8, 2017, will focus on "Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030."

Measures that are key to ensuring women's economic empowerment include bridging the gender pay gap, which stands at 24% globally; recognizing women's unpaid care and domestic work; addressing the gender gaps in leadership; and ensuring gender-responsive economic policies for job creation, poverty reduction, and sustainable, inclusive growth. Additionally, policy development must include the majority of women in the informal economy. More information can be found at: [tinyurl.com/j2xrb4o](http://tinyurl.com/j2xrb4o).



### March 21—International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The UN General Assembly has proclaimed March 21 the day when all eyes should be focused on racism. It may be particularly important in a time that is witnessing a surge of intolerance, racist views, and hate-driven violence. As former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said, "In these tumultuous times, we must stand up for rights and dignity for all, and for diversity and pluralism. We must speak out against anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry and other forms of hate. An assault on one minority community is an attack on all." Additional information can be found at: [tinyurl.com/h75d3td](http://tinyurl.com/h75d3td).

### The UN Commission on the Status of Women to Meet in NYC

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will meet at UN headquarters in New York from March 13-24, 2017. This year representatives of UN member states, civil society, and UN agencies will gather to discuss the priority theme of "women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work" and to review the "challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls."

The CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. During the

commission's annual two-week session, they assess progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Member states agree on further actions to accelerate progress and promote women's enjoyment of their rights in political, economic, and social fields. In addition, there are accompanying parallel and side events that focus on a wide range of issues affecting women and girls. More about CSW 61 can be found at [www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw61-2017](http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw61-2017).



This year, NRVC is offering eight workshops in 2017 intended for vocation ministers, formation teams, communicators, religious leadership, and others entrusted with the assessment of discerners and candidates. Workshops are designed from the NRVC three-component [curriculum](#) for those who wish to deepen their understanding of the complex theological, spiritual, psycho-sexual, ethical, and diversity issues often present in contemporary vocation ministry. Our annual [Summer Institute](#) will offer four workshops at the downtown campus of DePaul University, July 10-25, 2017. Choose to attend one or several workshops. This summer, the following workshops will be offered:

- Behavioral Assessment I, July 10-12, 2017
- Ethical Issues in Vocation Ministry and Formation Ministry, July 14-15, 2017
- Understanding, Assessing, and Fostering Psycho-sexual Integration, July 17-20, 2017
- Orientation Program for New Vocation Directors, July 21-25, 2017

NRVC strongly suggests that vocation ministers participate in ongoing educational opportunities to attend to their own vocation, faith formation, and to further develop their professional competencies. It is essential for vocation ministers to keep up-to-date on trends, issues, skills, and best practices in the field of vocation ministry.



## USCSAHT Seeking New Members

**U**S Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT) continues to grow and evolve as evidenced by its new logo and revamped website. Even more significant is its incorporation as a 501 (c) 3 and the work it has recently undertaken with the “Blocks and Bridges” team



from the Sisters of Charity Foundation in Cleveland to help educate its board of directors and professionalize its policies and procedures.

The network continues to actively engage the issue of human trafficking in a variety of ways. This past spring USCSAHT led a nationwide advocacy campaign to educate women in the Senate about the Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act and to urge them to co-sponsor the bill. It joined with anti-trafficking partners in Cleveland and Philadelphia to sponsor bus, billboard, and airport awareness signage during the Republican and Democratic National Conventions. Across the country, USCSAHT members have been running effective bus and billboard campaigns to raise awareness about human trafficking. USCSAHT also continues its close affiliation with Talitha Kum, the international network of religious involved in eradication of human trafficking.

USCSAHT is a collaborative, faith-based national network that provides education, supports access to survivor services, and engages in advocacy in an effort to eradicate modern-day slavery. Founded in 2013, the organization currently has more than 50 member congregations and coalitions. Membership is open to all US congregations of women religious, coalitions that include US women religious, as well as individual sisters committed to eradicating modern day slavery. Membership benefits include:

- Access to a network of congregations, coalitions, dioceses and other organizations working together to end human trafficking who can offer expertise, resources, and services across the United States as well as globally;
- Up-to-date, accurate information on various aspects of this complex crime through the monthly Stop

Trafficking! newsletter and other educational resources;

- Support for local efforts to end human trafficking;
- An opportunity to support the real needs of survivors.

More information about USCSAHT can be found at [www.sistersagainsttrafficking.org](http://www.sistersagainsttrafficking.org).



### Crossing the Border from Individual to One: Skills for Communal Discernment

Patricia Kozak, CSJ, will lead this workshop at the Mexican-American Catholic College on March 18. How might our communal life look different if we trust that deeper listening together can lead to being and acting in ways that are healing and transformative? Registration: [www.relforcon.org](http://www.relforcon.org).

### ForMission

A new cohort is forming for the next two-year formation program, ForMission, designed for persons new to or preparing for formation ministry in their congregations. Participants meet twice yearly for week-long intensive sessions, completing other program requirements at home. A unique feature of the program is the reading group each participant forms; composed of members of her/his own congregation, it contributes to the lifelong formation of other members of the province/congregation and highlights the wider community's responsibility for the formation of its newer members.

Applications for the new ForMission cohort are due April 12, 2017. Detailed information can be found at [www.relforcon.org](http://www.relforcon.org).



by Joan Mumaw, IHM  
President  
[www.solidarityfriends.org](http://www.solidarityfriends.org)

## Call to be in Solidarity with South Sudan

Thank you to all who responded to our appeal for support of the 5000+ refugees encamped at Riimenze. Solidarity staff, who manage an agricultural training project in the parish, are supporting those who have lost their homes in the conflict between the army and the rebels. We are grateful for an abundant crop of sweet potatoes! Plans are in place to dig a deeper borehole and erect a larger tank for the community. We await the necessary equipment for this to happen. It looks like this could be a long stay for the people who are eager to return to their plots of land and rebuild their lives with the help of Solidarity and religious around the world.

Solidarity with South Sudan has been in South Sudan since 2009. Many of the religious volunteers present in the country are coming to the end of their terms in the country. There is a need for new personnel to join the Solidarity Team.

This ministry, initiated by the UISG/USG is inspired by the Congress on Consecrated Life held in Rome in 2005. In a statement from the Congress, religious were invited to search for “a new paradigm...born of compassion for the downtrodden of the earth... around new priorities, new models of organization and open and flexible collaboration between men and women of good will.” You and your community can be a part of this initiative. Perhaps, you can call forth volunteers for this exciting and new style of ministry? Sisters, brothers and priests are working with the laity to build the capacity of the South Sudanese who will, in due time, assume responsibility for the work now being done by 26 expatriate religious from 17 congregations and 14 countries. These are just some of the needs for personnel:

- Administrators
- Nursing/midwifery tutors
- Teacher trainers for elementary school level
- Nurse for clinic at Riimenze
- Hospitality based in Juba
- Pastoral, trauma healing, reconciliation, and peace
- Philosophy lecturer for the seminary

You may not have staff to send, but you may be in a position to support someone else who can go. Annual cost of supporting a religious in ministry in South Sudan is estimated to be \$6500. Contributions can be made to: Friends in Solidarity, 8808 Cameron St. Silver Spring, MD 20910. For more information contact: Joan Mumaw, IHM at [jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com](mailto:jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com).

## Sign Up for the LCWR Resource Sharing Forum

LCWR offers a listserv that is open only to LCWR members and associates. Called the LCWR Resource Sharing Forum, the listserv provides a means for LCWR members to communicate with one another online with a question or to share information. Topics around which members have shared information in the past include: new sponsorship models, chapter facilitators, bilingual speakers on religious life, psychological testing for candidates, canon lawyers who deal with property issues, treatment centers for religious, restructuring buildings for assisted living, and much more.

LCWR members who have not signed up yet for this listserv are encouraged to do so. More information on the forum and how to sign up for it is available on the [LCWR website](http://www.lcwr.org) in the “Members” section. Members must enter their username and password to access this part of the site. Anyone who does not have her username or password may contact Carol Glidden at [cglidden@lcwr.org](mailto:cglidden@lcwr.org). Carol can also guide members through the process of signing up for the forum.