

November 2015

LCWR Participates in Papal Visit to the United States

LCWR members and staff were among the thousands who attended events when Pope Francis visited the United States. The LCWR office coordinated the participation of major superiors, novices, and novice directors at the canonization mass in Washington, DC on September 23. Fifty-three major superiors, 45 novices, and 12 novice directors from across the country were able to attend the mass, as well as some members of the LCWR staff. The staff had also received invitations to attend the welcoming reception at the White House, and to join the crowd outside of the Capitol when Pope Francis addressed Congress.



LCWR associate director for business and finance Grace Hartzog, SC with Martha Novelly, associate for special projects for CMSM at the canonization mass



LCWR associate director for communications Annmarie Sanders, IHM and executive director Joan Marie Steadman, CSC outside the US Capitol prior to the pope's arrival to address Congress



▲ *Pope Francis on the balcony of the US Capitol after addressing Congress.*

▶ *Ann Scholz, SSND, LCWR associate director for social mission, awaiting the pope below the balcony hours before he appeared*



LCWR Offers Leadership Development Opportunities

Three excellent opportunities are available for LCWR members looking for ongoing education, reflection, and prayer around the essential matters facing religious life leaders today.

Leading from Within Retreat

The LCWR Leading from Within Retreat is for LCWR members and LCWR associates who are serving in congregation leadership. Led by Marie McCarthy, SP and Janet Mock, CSJ, the retreat will be held

(continued on page 3)



From the LCWR Presidency

Nada Te Turbe

by Sharon Holland, IHM — LCWR Past President

Recently we celebrated the 500th anniversary of St. Teresa of Avila's birth. We prayed the famous "bookmark" taken from the margin of the breviary she was using at the time of her death in 1582:

Let nothing disturb you.
Let nothing frighten you.
All things pass away.
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
They who have God lack nothing.
God alone is enough

Are these the pious thoughts of a comfortable 16th-century Spanish nun? Not likely! These are the words of a mature woman of prayer and contemplation; an intrepid reformer of religious life; a friend of Jesus, who sometimes wondered about how he treated his friends; one of the first women recognized as a doctor of the church (1970). As a woman who faced many obstacles, from her sisters, the brothers, confessors, and bishops, Teresa's words may have served her as a mantra to maintain courage and trust. She was a woman who knew patient endurance and also how to dance.

I can imagine Teresa bumping along in a mule cart on the way to the next Carmel, repeating to herself, "Solo Dios basta." Then I think of Francis, moving through the streets of Washington, New York, and Philadelphia in his Fiat. If together, what might they have talked about?

Countless moments of the papal visit return to mind. From the opening scenes in DC, there are the words of President Obama, welcoming Pope Francis to the United States. They range from the exercise of authority to



If Teresa and Francis could converse along the way in the Fiat, what might they say regarding the exercise of authority and building of ecclesial communion?

I believe they would share the Joy of the Gospel.

the issues of our day. "In your humility, your embrace of simplicity, in the gentleness of your words and the generosity of your spirit, we see a living example of Jesus' teachings, a leader whose moral authority comes not just through words but also through deeds."

President Obama reminded us of the Pope's insistence that the most powerful message of the Lord is mercy, including such issues as welcoming the stranger with empathy, whether refugees fleeing war or immigrants seeking a better life.

This mercy, the President continued, means "showing compassion and love for the marginalized and the outcast, to those who have suffered, and those who have caused suffering and seek redemption."

In a different setting, we recall words of Pope Francis to our US bishops at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington. Francis shows true understanding of the fears which can interfere with a bishop's desires and efforts to foster a church of unity and forgiveness. He then proposes the way of dialogue.

Dialogue, Francis insists, is not as a "shrewd strategy" but the path forward in fidelity to Jesus. "Harsh and divisive language does not befit the tongue of a pastor, it has no place in his heart; ... only the enduring allure of goodness and love remains truly convincing."

If Teresa and Francis could converse along the way in the Fiat, what might they say regarding the exercise of authority and building of ecclesial communion? I believe they would share the Joy of the Gospel.

Solo Dios basta!

LCWR Offers Leadership Development Opportunities

(continued from page 1)

from **January 17-22, 2016 at the Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson, Arizona.** This five-day retreat will provide opportunities to reflect on the blessings and challenges of religious life leadership today. The days will include input, contemplative space, a variety of ritual experiences, and some opportunity for individual spiritual direction and sharing in small wisdom circles for those who choose. **More information and registration materials are available at lcwr.org/sites/default/files/calendar/attachments/lfwretreat16.pdf.**

Imagining Justice

Imagining Justice, a gathering for leaders and justice promoters, will focus in 2016 on Justice and the Ministry of Leadership and will be led by former LCWR president Carol Zinn, SSJ. The program will be held at **Bethany Retreat Center in Lutz, Florida from March 7-10, 2016.**

Participants will explore the questions: In these times of significant transformation of consciousness and transitions within and among religious congregations, how will the work of the Gospel, the ministry of justice, move forward in a sustainable way? Can we imagine new ways of engaging the ministry of justice together, ways that both deepen the spirit and passion that undergird our work and strengthen the sustainability of the ministry? Using the LCWR Call 2015-2022, the encyclicals "Laudato Si" and "Evangelii Gaudium," and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals as resources, Carol will examine some of the major issues facing the world today and help participants imagine new ways of doing the ministry of justice together. More information is available at: lcwr.org/sites/default/files/calendar/attachments/imaginingjustice2016.pdf.

New Leader Workshop

The LCWR New Leader Workshop is undergoing significant adaptations for 2016 in ways that will allow participants to have more opportunities for interaction with the presenters and chances to apply what they

are learning directly to the realities of leadership today. More information on these changes will be available soon. In the meantime, all LCWR members who wish to participate in this workshop, especially those who are in the first or second years of their leadership terms, are encouraged to mark their calendars for **April 7-10, 2016 in Mundelein, Illinois.**



The US Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) is collaborating with the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR), the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), and LCWR to post information about religious life on its various social media platforms for the duration of the Year of Consecrated Life.

LCWR is asking its members to encourage their communications personnel to make their materials available for this project. Postings may include links to items already on congregation websites that provide insights into the life and works of Catholic sisters today. Links to short videos on women religious, vocation stories, prayer and reflective materials, and many other informative pieces have already been shared.

The Communicators for Women Religious (CWR), the professional organization for communicators working with Catholic sisters, is assisting LCWR in collecting, selecting, and editing submissions for this project. Members of CWR receive instructions monthly for submitting materials.

Members are encouraged to follow the postings at:

- USCCB Facebook: www.facebook.com/usccb
- Twitter: [#YCL15](https://twitter.com/YCL15) [#YCL2015](https://twitter.com/YCL2015)
- Instagram: instagram.com/usccb

THE Occasional Papers



Living in Communion

The upcoming issue of *Occasional Papers* will explore this period in religious life as one rich with potential for deep transformation. Although one could interpret the difficult changes being experienced within religious institutes today as a sign that this way of life is dying, these deep changes may also be seen as a way of preparing religious congregations for significant transformation.

The articles in this issue will provide assistance to religious with effectively navigating this period marked by large amounts of loss, relinquishment, and death. Such losses can become obstacles to the ability to re-imagine religious life for these times and the times ahead.

This issue will offer articles that explore the need for personal and communal grieving and the essential role healthy grieving plays to free religious for the creative work of moving this lifeform forward with hope and imagination. Other articles will assist us in placing the losses we experience in a larger theological context by examining understandings of communion and the oneness that exists among those living and among those who have passed on from this life. What might this invitation to live intentionally in communion mean for those in religious life today?

Included in this issue will be an interview on the communion of saints with theologian Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ.

Although all LCWR members, associates, and subscribers will receive a copy of *Occasional Papers*, many leaders order additional copies for their own members and associates. Orders and payment must be received by **December 16, 2015**. Orders may be placed online at lcwr.org/publications/winter-2016-living-communion.

Subscriptions Soon to be Available LCWR's *Occasional Papers*, As Well as Digital Downloads of Out-of- Print Editions

One-year subscriptions will soon be available for purchase for LCWR's journal, *Occasional Papers*. This option will be helpful to readers who are not LCWR members or associates and whose communities do not purchase copies for their members. Subscriptions may be purchased by anyone who is interested in matters pertaining to religious life, leadership, spirituality, and more.

An option is also available to purchase a subscription as a gift for another person. A downloadable gift card will be available after the purchase is made and can be given to the gift recipient.

Information on purchasing subscriptions will soon be on the LCWR website.

Another feature soon to be available will be the purchase of digital downloads of out-of-print editions of *Occasional Papers*.

LCWR Membership Renewals Due Now

LCWR membership renewal for 2016 is underway. The major superior from each congregation and the leaders of member organizations should have received an email concerning their renewal of membership. Any questions on this may be directed to LCWR's membership coordinator Carol Glidden at cglidden@lcwr.org or at 301-588-4955.

LCWR Co-Sponsors Congressional Briefings: The Pope Francis Effect on Immigration

In preparation for Pope Francis's address to Congress, LCWR and its partners in the Justice for Immigrants (JFI) coalition sponsored briefings in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The two meetings drew more than 100 congressional staffers.



Ann Scholz, SSND; Sean Carroll, SJ; and JoAnn Persch, RSM

Anticipating Pope Francis's inclusion of the United States immigration crisis in his address to Congress, briefing planners hoped to prepare staffers and their bosses to receive Francis's message.

At each of the briefings Catholic community leaders addressed the connections between Catholic Social Teaching and migration, life on the Southwest border, challenges facing immigrant families, and the current legal and political landscape regarding immigration.

Panelists included Sean Carroll, SJ, executive director of the Kino Border Initiative, a bi-national organization providing care for recent deportees as well as education and social analysis related to migration in Nogales, Sonora and Nogales, Arizona; Pilar Molina, a DACA holder, community leader, and small business owner from Norristown, Pennsylvania, whose husband was detained; JoAnn Persch, RSM of the Interfaith Committee for Detained Immigrants Chicago, which works in detention centers, a deportation center, the immigration court, as well as with a post-detention accompaniment program; and Kevin Appleby, director of the Office of Migration Policy and Public Affairs, US Conference of Catholic Bishops. Ann Scholz, SSND, associate director for social mission for LCWR, moderated the panel and reflected on Pope Francis's message of compassion and justice for migrants.



Catholic Social Ministry Gathering Scheduled for January 23-26, 2016

Catholic advocates will gather in Washington, DC this January for the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (CSMG). Centered around the theme Called to Live Mercy in Our Common Home, this year's CSMG will focus on interpreting and living out Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* during the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Planners anticipate more than 50 sessions presented by social mission leaders. Plenary sessions will feature Kathleen McManus, OP and Dr. Meghan Clark. More information is available at: tinyurl.com/qznox86.

Third Annual Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath Scheduled

December 14 is the third anniversary of the tragic Sandy Hook shooting. While gun violence is a daily reality, the mass shooting of elementary school children in Newtown remains the most powerful, haunting reminder of how out of control gun violence is in the United States.

LCWR and Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence are once again joining with the Newtown community for the National Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath Weekend, December 10-14. Partnerships like these seek to continue educating people of faith about what is working to save lives in communities across the country and to encourage elected officials to act, locally and federally. Faiths United is once again encouraging congregations, local communities, and parishes to be counted among those observing the 2015 commemoration.

Participating could involve praying, taking a moment of reflection, or handing out an educational flyer on the most effective measures to reduce gun violence. Event ideas, sample services, and educational flyers are available at decembersabbath.org.

USCSAHT Gather in DC

Core members of United States Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT) met in Washington October 11-13 to assess their progress and plan future efforts to end human trafficking.

The first day included discussion of reports from each of four work groups on their efforts to develop communications, educational resources, legislative advocacy materials, and survivor support programs as well as opportunities for their own education.

Rachel Harper from Shared Hope International spoke on research about sex trafficking and efforts to prevent the conditions that foster sex trafficking, restore victims of sex slavery, and bring justice to vulnerable women and children.

Faith in Public Life's Dan Nejfelt worked with members to help them hone their message about human trafficking and to make effective use of opportunities to spread that message using traditional and social media.

The next day the group headed to Capitol Hill where they met with Senate and House staffers from their home states. USCSAHT members shared information about the organization and its legislative priorities for the 114th Congress. They discussed the need for greater oversight of foreign labor recruiters, business supply chain transparency, funding assistance for trafficking survivors, training on human trafficking of federal government employees, and programs and policies to empower survivors and prevent human trafficking.

US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking 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. More information is available at www.sistersagainstrafficking.org.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

Leading from Within Retreat

Redemptorist Retreat Center

Tucson, Arizona

January 17 — 22, 2016

Imagining Justice

Bethany Center

Lutz, Florida

March 7 — 10, 2016

LCWR New Leader Workshop

Conference Center

University of St. Mary of the Lake

Mundelein, Illinois

April 7 — 10, 2016

LCWR Assembly

Atlanta, Georgia

August 9—13, 2016

LCWR Assembly

Orlando, Florida

August 8—12, 2017

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri

August 7—11, 2018



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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. Website: www.lcwr.org



- Faith leaders' letter to Congress welcoming Pope Francis' concern for the poor and the planet and his call for a discussion of critical issues that transcends conventional divisions. Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (9/16/15)
- Letter to President Obama making specific recommendations for how the United States should respond to the spiraling refugee crisis in the Middle East. LCWR (9/18/15)
- Letter to Congress calling on the Obama Administration and US Congress to show bold leadership and increase the number of Syrians refugees resettled in the United States. Marcia Allen, CSJ (9/30/15)
- Letter from 700+ faith leaders urging members of Congress to oppose legislation that would further criminalize undocumented immigrants or infringe on the rights of states, cities, localities, and police departments to regulate how they interact with ICE. Ann Scholz, SSND (10/6/15)
- Interfaith letter to Senate and House appropriations committees requesting robust FY16 funding allocations for international relief and development programs. LCWR (10/ 13/15)
- Petition to Pennsylvania Secretary of the Department of Human Services, Ted Dallas, asking him to immediately revoke the license of the Berks County Family Detention Center. LCWR 10/15/15.

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.



Retirement:

An Invitation to Transformation

Presenter: Paula Cooney, IHM

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

3:00 -4:00 PM EST

Registration: www.relforcon.org/webinar

Advent Retreat

Learning to Live and Pray in Joyful Hope

(Jointly offered by RFC and NRVC)

Addie Lorraine Walker, SSND

December 14-17, 2015

Redemptorist Renewal Center, Tucson, Arizona Webinar jointly offered by RFC and NRRO

Registration: www.relforcon.org/advent-retreat

For Mission

Class of 2018 registration is now open.

Application materials may be obtained by calling the RFC office at 202-827-4562.

More information on the RFC website www.relforcon.org.



Please remember
LCWR's generous donors and
their intentions in your prayer.

News from the UN

Pope Francis Opens UN General Assembly

On September 25 Pope Francis became the fifth pontiff to visit the United Nations and the first to address such a large gathering of world leaders. He began by congratulating the UN on its 70th anniversary and commending it for its many achievements which he called, “lights which help to dispel the darkness of the disorder caused by unrestrained ambitions and collective forms of selfishness.”



In his address to the General Assembly, Pope Francis touched on many themes. He recognized “the right of the environment to exist” and challenged member states to take “practical and constant, concrete steps and immediate measures for preserving and improving the natural environment,” and he called for “integral human development” that enables men and women to be dignified agents of their own destiny and exercise their full human dignity. He concluded his remarks with a clarion call to the representatives to “set aside partisan and ideological interests, and sincerely strive to serve the common good.” The full text is available at: tinyurl.com/psmlxfq.

UN General Assembly Adopts Sustainable Development Goals

The UN General Assembly adopted an audacious new sustainable development agenda on September 25. “We have a big, bold agenda before us – now we must work to make it real in people’s lives everywhere,” said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The historic new 15-year agenda, entitled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” which was agreed upon by the 193 member states of the United Nations includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strives to eradicate extreme poverty and preserve the planet.

Having received worldwide support from civil society, business, parliamentarians, and other actors, the SDGs represent an unprecedented agreement around sustainable development priorities. With the shared global goals and targets, nation-states will tailor them and implement policies at the country level. The follow-up and review process will be undertaken on an annual basis and a progress report prepared by the secretary-general. More information is available at: sustainabledevelopment.un.org.



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