

October 2016



Nearly 800 people participated in the 2016 LCWR assembly in Atlanta, Georgia

LCWR Assembly Deepens Understanding of the Essential Role of Contemplation

At the annual LCWR assembly, held August 9-12 in Atlanta, Georgia, nearly 800 participants engaged in contemplative processes to explore the assembly theme of “Embracing the Mystery: Living Transformation.” The presentations and processes led the participants to new understandings of the unique opportunities open to US Catholic sisters at this time and how those opportunities may be explored. All of the speakers pointed to the need for contemplative engagement with the struggles and sufferings of the world.

Liz Sweeney, SSJ set the context for the assembly with an overview of integral consciousness and a look at the great evolutionary shift occurring in the world. She posited that Catholic sisters are equipped to assume a role in helping to bring about a shift in consciousness that would lead humanity toward living with ever greater inclusivity and love.



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Election 2016: LCWR Delivers Letter to Presidential Candidates

More than 5600 Catholic sisters signed a letter asking the US presidential candidates “to engage in political dialogue that reflects the principles and values upon which this nation was founded.”

Written by LCWR, the letter asked candidates to refrain from rhetoric that stokes the fires of fear and to engage in constructive dialogue during this campaign season.

Copies of the letter were delivered to presidential candidates Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, Gary Johnson, Jill Stein, their running mates, and party chairs on August 8.

“Unfortunately, it seems in this particular political season commitment to political discourse that preserves the dignity of the human person and promotes the common good is in short supply,” said Joan Marie Steadman, CSC, executive director of LCWR. “This is why LCWR is calling for civility in our discourse and decency in our political interaction.”

From the LCWR Presidency

Remembering as Contemplative Practice

by Mary Pellegrino, CSJ — LCWR President

In a span of less than two weeks Margaret Held, SSSF and Paula Merrill, SCN were brutally killed in their home in Durant, Mississippi; Isabel Sola Matas, RJM was gunned down in her car in Port au Prince, Haiti; a Bolivian sister in La Paz was kidnapped and raped by four men, two of whom wore police uniforms; Georgetown University publicly acknowledged its role in our country's slavery trade and named the actions it will take to seek reconciliation with the descendants of slaves owned by the Jesuits in 1838 who were sold to ensure the financial stability of the school; and Mother Theresa was declared a saint.



name deeper truths that are revealed. One of the deeper truths revealed in this spaciousness is that each of these events and the people involved are united to one another, woven of the same cloth. And not only are they joined to one another, but we, too, as women religious are united to the events and the people in a profoundly mystical way.

We are united to Margaret and Paula, to Isa and the Bolivian sister, to our Jesuit brothers and to Mother (now Saint)

Teresa in a way that is both blindingly obvious and painfully obscure at the same time. We are united in and through a shared consecration.

I'm overwhelmed just remembering. Yet remembering, as contemplative practice, is precisely what we can offer to our communities, our church and the world at this time.

Our shared consecration joins us in almost visceral and palpable ways to the joyful blessings, the heart-wrenching grief and sorrow and the institutional guilt that our

sisters and brothers carry so publicly at this time. So stretched and broken are our hearts that the simple act of remembering becomes, perhaps, the most sacred response we can render.

Remembering as contemplative practice allows us, too, to revisit events and circumstances from the past in ways that help us to recognize which memories are mere nostalgia and which have the power to affect the future. Which are like Johann Metz's dangerous memories, "incalculable visitants from the past," whose power and grace make demands on us in the present in order to shape a desired future.

To hold lovingly and contemplatively in our memory these recent events and the people involved honors their sanctity and creates a spaciousness within ourselves in which we can begin to notice and name deeper truths that are revealed.

So for now, let their memories rise. And let them be dangerous to us.

Dedicated to the memory of:

- Margaret Held, SSSF
- Paula Merrill, SCN
- Isabel Sola Matas, RJM
- St. Teresa of Calcutta
- The named and unnamed slaves, from whose ultimate sacrifice, we continue to benefit.

To hold lovingly and contemplatively in our memory these recent events and the people involved honors their sanctity and creates a spaciousness within ourselves in which we can begin to notice and

LCWR Assembly Deepens Understanding of the Essential Role of Contemplation

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Author and consultant **Margaret Wheatley** shared with the assembly her personal experience of discovering how contemplation enables her to stay in the midst of the heartbreak of the world – not necessarily to alleviate it, but to be present to those who are suffering. Her own story shed light on how one may stay inserted in the suffering of others, not be overwhelmed with grief, and be a presence of love.



In her keynote address, former LCWR president **Pat Farrell, OSF**, also spoke of centering religious life leadership in contemplation, describing contemplation as “a response to the movement of Spirit that has been stirring in and among us for some time now, becoming increasingly manifest.” She added, “Where this contemplative impulse might be leading is less obvious. What will be the long-term effect of reclaiming and deepening the contemplative dimension of religious life, of exploring emerging consciousness?”



“I believe that LCWR’s contemplative focus is once again positioning us to respond to a future impossible to anticipate,” she said. “The shift that has taken place in LCWR is not just for this moment, and, of course, not just for ourselves. I believe we are being led in this direction for the sake of the church and the world.” She also shared with the participants her own personal experiences of contemplation in relationship to leadership.



Participants practiced contemplative

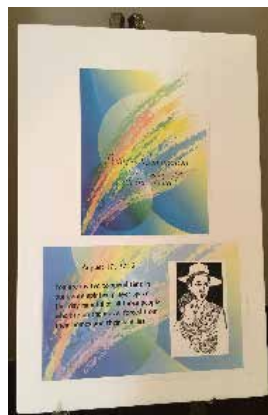
dialogue in small deepening groups following the two keynote presentations asking the questions: What is required of us as leaders having heard these addresses? What matters most for the future of our communities, religious life, and the world we serve?

Fourteen “listeners” served the assembly by guiding the deepening groups and collecting their insights so that they could be shared with the whole assembly. Following each deepening group session, the 14 held their own contemplative dialogue with Liz Sweeney, SSJ in order to listen together for the movement of God in the assembly. The listeners were: Pat Bergen, CSJ; Catherine Bertrand, SSND (who also served as the assembly facilitator); Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ; Eileen Campbell, RSM; Susan Francois, CSJP; Rebecca Ann Gemma, OP; Maria Hughes, ASC; Ann Jackson, PBVM; Sheila Lemieux, CSJP; Toby Lardie, HM; Pat McDermott, RSM; Margaret Perron, RJM; Nancy Schreck, OSF; and Rita Ann Teichman, CSJ.



Contemplative dialogue of assembly listeners

Throughout the assembly participants were also invited to commit to spending time each day in personal and communal contemplation that placed them in deeper communion with the world, especially the places of great suffering and pain.



Participants were offered a focus for their contemplative prayer each day



“A Space to be in Communion with the World” was utilized for personal and communal contemplation

LCWR Assembly

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In her presidential address to the conference, **Marcia Allen, CSJ** offered insights on how US women religious can face the challenges of smaller numbers in religious life today. Noting the dramatic shifts that will be required of Catholic sisters, she stated, "... we have now been thrust onto a different plane, a place where no rational thought, no logic, no well-thought out and time-tested strategies, plans and goals serve. Everything we have known about ourselves is but history at this point. It will turn out to be a hollow shell, a pyrrhic victory unless we enter into the challenge before us. We are thrust forward into a horizon – a horizon of expectation: a far-wide imaginal scape in which we can expect every possibility and potential that might await us. There before us lies a full panoply of opportunities. It seems to me that it is our responsibility here to enter into this horizon and to enter it with all our expectations."



Later in a conversation on stage among the LCWR presidents and executive director, the conference leaders spoke of the need for LCWR to look at new ways of organizing in order to be as responsive as possible to its mission today and into the future. They also shared their insights on the transformation occurring within religious life today and on some of the ways in which Catholic sisters may most effectively serve the needs of the world today.

Shannen Dee Williams, assistant professor at the University of Knoxville, Tennessee also addressed the assembly on the existence of racism in the history of communities of US women religious. Following responses by LCWR members **Anita Baird, DHM** and **Dawn Tomaszewski, SP**, the participants renewed their commitment within a prayer service, led by Region 5



chair **Greta Jupiter, SSF**, to build an inclusive church that welcomes ethnic and cultural diversity.

The assembly presenters came together on the final day for a conversation that reflected on what each experienced during the assembly and its implications for the future.



Catherine Bertrand, SSND facilitates a conversation among Pat Farrell, OSF; Margaret Wheatley; and Liz Sweeney, SSJ

During the assembly, the body unanimously affirmed a resolution that states: "Following in the footsteps of Jesus, we commit ourselves to examine the root causes of injustice, particularly racism, and our own complicity as congregations, and to work to effect systemic change as we struggle to establish economic justice, abolish modern-day slavery, ensure immigrant rights, promote nonviolence, and protect Earth and its biosphere. We pledge prayer, education, and advocacy and commit to using our collective voice, resources, and power in collaboration with others to establish justice which reflects God's abundant love and desire that all may have life."

During the assembly, LCWR bestowed the 2016 Outstanding Leadership Award on **Janice Bader, CPPS** who had most recently served as executive director of the National Religious Retirement Office. She is now the president of her community, the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, Missouri.



At the conclusion of the assembly, **Mary Pellegrino**, the congregation moderator of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, Pennsylvania, assumed the office of LCWR president for 2016-2017. The conference voted in **Teresa Maya, CCVI** as its president-elect. Currently, she is

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LCWR Assembly

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the congregation leader of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas.



2016-17 LCWR presidency: Teresa Maya, CCVI; Mary Pellegrino, CSJ; and Marcia Allen, CSJ



The assembly thanks outgoing board members: Greta Jupiter, SSF; Pat Cormack, SCSC; Lourdes Leal, CDP; and Stephanie Still, PBVM



The assembly blesses the members of the 2016-17 LCWR national board

LCWR Assembly Resources

LCWR encourages its members to share the materials from the assembly with their own community members. The following resources are available on the public side of the LCWR website at lcwr.org/calendar/lcwr-assembly-2016:

- Transcription of Keynote Address by Margaret Wheatley
- Presidential Address by Marcia Allen, CSJ
- Keynote Address by Pat Farrell, OSF
- Spanish and French Translations of Address by Pat Farrell, OSF (*Translations were done through the generosity of the Sisters of Bon Secours*)
- Slides from Presentation on “Fostering the Evolution of Love” by Liz Sweeney, SSJ and Recommended Resources
- Response to Presentation on Racism and US Religious Life by Dawn Tomaszewski, SP
- Acceptance of LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award -- Janice Bader, CPPS
- Homily by John Pavlik, OFM, Cap on Feast of St. Clare
- Animoto Video of Assembly Highlights
- Press Release/Summary of the Assembly
- Information on Ordering CDs or DVDs of some of the Assembly Presentations
- Video of the Assembly produced by the Archdiocese of Atlanta



LCWR member Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, CDP was among the assembly participants interviewed by the archdiocese of Atlanta for a video about the LCWR assembly.

LCWR National Board Conducts Meetings from a Contemplative Stance

The LCWR national board met both prior to and following the assembly in Atlanta. At its pre-assembly meeting, the board welcomed three new regional chairs: Leona Bruner, OSF (5); Theresa Sandok, OSM (9); and Judith Dieterle, SSL (14). The board received updates from the LCWR presidency, treasurer, and staff, and engaged in preparation for the assembly.

The board conducted its two-and-a-half day post-assembly meeting in a contemplative mode, spending time with questions that included: What is the essential work of religious leaders today “embracing the Mystery, living transformation”? To what are you willing to commit in terms of contemplative engagement? What is the next natural evolution of the assembly to keep moving forward? What from the assembly could be shared

in regions, congregations, ministries? In light of the experience at the assembly what would be helpful for facilitators who work with leadership teams to know?

The board also shared their experiences of and insights about the document, *Mutuae Relationes*, as well as their experiences on the impact of the Year of Mercy that will be shared with the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. Members also engaged in conversations on where LCWR members are finding hope and energy, what they are wrestling and struggling with, and what the board and staff need to know from the members.

In addition to endorsing a document on the centrality of gospel nonviolence (see page 8), the board voted to extend the terms of the two at-large members of the board’s executive committee for another year: Rosemary Brennan, CSJ and Rose Marie Jasinski, CBS.



Members of the LCWR national board and staff enjoy an evening out during the board meeting in Atlanta

Making Assembly Attendance Possible for Members Through Donations to the Scholarship Fund

LCWR expresses its profound gratitude to the congregations that sent donations to assist members who requested financial support for registration and/or hotel accommodations for the 2016 LCWR assembly. Members who received support have noted their deep appreciation and promise their prayers for the donors.

LCWR Contemporary Religious Life Committee Meets in Washington, DC

The LCWR Contemporary Religious Life Committee met in Washington, DC from August 25-26. The committee's agenda included:

- Processing the 2016 LCWR assembly -- including a review of all the assembly evaluations and a discussion of what worked well and what might be changed for future assemblies
- Ideas for sharing the insights raised in the assembly deepening group processes
- Mining the wisdom of the facilitators who attended the assembly
- Initial planning for the 2017 LCWR assembly

LCWR invited the approximately 40 facilitators who attended the 2016 assembly to meet via videoconference with members of the committee, as well as the LCWR presidents and staff. Twenty of the facilitators participated in one of three videoconferences where they shared their impressions of the assembly and what they learned, as well the key issues and concerns that they see emerging among women religious that could benefit from LCWR's attention.



Contemporary Religious Life Committee at the Washington Retreat Center: Maria Hughes, ASC; Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ; Pat McDermott, RSM; Catherine Bertrand, SSND; Marie McCarthy, SP; Miriam Ukeritis, CSJ; Joan Marie Steadman, CSC; and Annmarie Sanders, IHM



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 next year, LCWR will share 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

- Carving space for silence and stillness opens our hearts and being to evolving newness and mystery.
- We are called to be faithful to the practice of nourishing spaciousness so that we can be fully present to the Now and embrace darkness and resistance. In so doing, we will have what we need so that we can receive the grace of transformation into a future yet unknown.
- To live a contemplative life is a necessity, not an option, for the sake of the world.



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LCWR Endorses Appeal to Nonviolence and Just Peace

At its August 2016 meeting, the LCWR board unanimously endorsed An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Recommit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence, the consensus statement of the Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference held in Rome from April 11-13, 2016.

The conference brought together more than 80 people for an unprecedented gathering to discuss the Catholic Church's history of, and commitment to, nonviolence. Lay people, theologians, members of religious congregations, priests, and bishops from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Oceania gathered to call on the Catholic Church to take a clear stand for active nonviolence and against all forms of violence.

After days marked by communal prayer, careful listening, and honest dialogue, participants affirmed a call to further the Catholic understanding and practice of active nonviolence on the road to just peace. The Appeal to the Catholic Church to Recommit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence is now open for endorsements by other Catholic organizations and individuals at tinyurl.com/zrdaawl. Additional information is available at nonviolencejustpeace.net.



New Cohorts Forming for Leadership Pathways

Registration has been extended to October 1 for those interested in joining a learning cohort in transformational leadership beginning in the fall of 2016. Members have the opportunity to participate in one of three offerings in Leadership Pathways:

- Becoming the Leaders We Hope To Be: The Foundations of Transformational Leadership
- Rooted in God's Mission: The Foundations of Mission-Grounded Leadership
- Leading in an Evolving Universe

Fuller descriptions of each of these offerings are available at lcwr.org/resources/leadership-pathways. Questions about Leadership Pathways may be directed to Marie McCarthy, SP, mmccarthy@lcwr.org.

Women of the Senate Campaign Garners Support of Thousands

The Legislative Advocacy Work Group of US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT) led a 10-week campaign to build support among women senators for S.1968 the Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act. The bill, introduced by Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), would amend the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 to require certain large companies to disclose information describing any measures the company has taken to identify and address conditions of forced labor, slavery, human trafficking, and the worst forms of child labor within the company's supply chains.

The letters were personally delivered to senate offices by Ann Scholz, SSND and Marie Lucey, OSF and contained 3,352 signatures from USCSAHT members and

others representing all 50 states and several countries overseas. Each letter, with signatures included, was an impressive 44-pages in length.



Former LCWR staff member Marie Lucey, OSF (left) and Ann Scholz, SSND (center) deliver letters to senate offices

Hilton Launches Campaign to Raise Awareness of Catholic Sisters

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation recently commissioned a study to better understand how people in the United States perceive Catholic sisters. The study showed that while sisters are widely respected and highly admired, perceptions are somewhat dated. The study also showed that as respondents learned more, positive impressions of Catholic sisters and the church as a whole increased.

On September 6, the foundation launched Sister To All, a social media campaign to publicize the research, counter common stereotypes, and increase understanding of Catholic sisters. The campaign, which honors the lives and works of Catholic sisters was timed to follow the canonization of Mother Teresa on September 4.

Valuable resources about the research and the lives and ministries of a variety of Catholic sisters across the country are available at www.SisterToAll.org. The Hilton Foundation encourages use of these materials by religious institutes and anyone else interested in promoting greater understanding of religious life today.



Images from Sister To All campaign website

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

Bethany Retreat Center
Lutz, Florida
January 15 — 20, 2017

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

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 11 — 15, 2018

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri
August 7— 11, 2018

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.



- Faith leaders' letter urging the US government to welcome and assist refugees and to lead a robust global response to assist and protect refugees overseas. Ann Scholz, SSND (8/1/16)
- Letter to President Obama expressing concern about United States' revisions to language in the draft outcome document for the September 19, 2016 UN high-level meeting on refugees and migrants, aimed at undermining international human rights legal protections for asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants, including children. LCWR (8/1/16)
- LCWR letter to presidential candidates, their running mates and party chairs urging them to engage in political dialogue that reflects the principles and values upon which this nation was founded. 5671 Women Religious (8/8/16)
- Letter to Senate and House leadership urging them to include Senate-level funding for the Complex Crises Fund and Atrocities Prevention Fund within the Fiscal Year 2017 State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs (SFOPS) Appropriations Bill as they conference the House and Senate versions of the bill. LCWR (8/11/16)
- Letter to President Obama requesting that the Secretary of the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issue new Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations for El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras in light of the continued injunction of the expansion of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA). LCWR (8/24/16)
- Letter to President Obama voicing concern that US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is not properly applying prosecutorial discretion standards specifically whether proper discretion is being granted for persons with past criminal convictions. LCWR (8/24/16)
- Faith letter President Obama commending him for his leadership in convening heads of state to make bold new commitments to refugee protection, as-

sistance, and solutions, including increased resettlement. LCWR (8/29/16)

- Ecumenical letter to presidential candidates expressing concern about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Israeli military occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza and asking them to pledge, if elected, to take urgent and vigorous steps to seek creative political solutions. Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (9/1/16)
- Religious leaders' faith statement published as a forward in Bread for the World's 2017 Hunger Report. Mary Pellegrino, CSJ (9/15/16)
- Call by religious leaders representing many faith communities and others on the International Day of Peace for an end to war in Syria. LCWR (9/2/16)
- Letter to members of Congress urging them to complete work on an omnibus appropriations bill at the earliest possible date. LCWR (9/7/16)
- Faith community letter applauding Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson on his decision to evaluate the use of private prisons to detain immigrants. LCWR (9/7/16)
- Letter to President Obama applauding his leadership in convening a Refugee Summit on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, presenting the international community with a historic opportunity to take bold actions to address the primary driver of global displacement, violent conflict. LCWR (9/14/16)

Celebrate the Feast of Saint Francis October 4

The Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC) is offering a variety of resources to celebrate the October 4 feast of St. Francis, the patron saint of creation. CCC has available for download a free 90-minute program for the feast, "Dial Down the Heat: Cultivate the Common Good for our Common Home." The program guide includes: prayers and scripture readings, a short video with discussion questions; activities, and resources for advocacy.

CCC's 2016 program will help answer Pope Francis' call for constructive and civil dialogue about the place of humanity in God's creation and the environmental impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities. Resources are available at www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/FOSF.

Justice Promoters to Meet in Chicago in March 2017

The second convocation of justice and peace promoters for congregations of women religious will be held March 5-7, 2017 at Techny Towers in Chicago.



The theme, “Which Roots Will We Water? Systemic Change and JPIC Ministry,” will allow participants to explore the root causes of the many forms of violence and injustice that plague society today.

Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, author of *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological and Economic Vocation* will provide the keynote. Dr. Moe-Lobeda has lectured around the world on theology and matters of climate justice, economic justice, environmental racism, economic globalization, moral agency, and eco-feminist theology.

Registration is open to all those who currently serve as promoters of justice, peace, and integrity of creation for women’s congregations in the United States. The convocation registration fee is \$195.00 plus housing. Space is limited. Participants may register at tinyurl.com/grh6s5x; questions may be directed to jcwrteam@gmail.com.

Advocates Call on ICE to Stop Detaining Families

During the last week of August faith-based advocates and community members delivered baby supplies to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Offices across the country to highlight immigrant infants and children who continue to be detained by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Women religious were instrumental in organizing events in Baltimore, San Antonio, Omaha, and Philadelphia. Their actions were designed to draw attention to the scandalous practice by ICE of incarcerating children and mothers fleeing violence in their home countries.

Family detention is the systematic incarceration of asylum-seeking mothers and children, mostly from

Central America. Currently there are three facilities located in Berks County, PA; Karnes City, TX, and Dilley, TX. These “baby jails” feature prison-like iron doors and fencing.

In 2014, the average age of the total population in family detention was six years old. Recently, ever-younger children are being detained with their families, with many under 18 month olds being held in the Texas facilities.

News from the United Nations

October 11—International Day of the Girl Child focuses attention on the need to address the persistent discrimination and violence girls continue to face and to promote girls’ empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights. Information about this year’s theme is available at www.un.org/en/events/girlchild.



October 16—World Food Day 2016 will focus on the hard reality that climate is changing and food and agriculture must too. One of the biggest issues related to climate change is food security. The world’s poorest, many of whom are farmers, fishers, and pastoralists, are being hit hardest by higher temperatures and an increasing frequency in weather-related disasters. More information is available at www.fao.org/world-food-day/2016/home/en.

October 17—International Day for the Eradication of Poverty presents an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty, a chance for them to make their concerns heard, and a moment to recognize that people living in poverty are the first ones to fight against poverty. More information may be found at www.un.org/en/events/povertyday.

October 24—United Nations Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the United Nations Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. Even to this day, “The United Nations works for the entire human family of seven billion people, and cares for the earth, our one and only home,” said Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Information about this year’s theme is available at www.un.org/en/events/unday.



RFC Ongoing Formation Opportunities

The Religious Formation Conference (RFC) continues its fall workshop series, entitled “Conversations at the Well: Crossing Over to Meet the Other and Oneself” with sessions in November (“Acting on the Journey of Transformation” given by Don Bisson, FMS) and in December (“Crossing the Borders of Human Exceptionalism: Community, Colonizations, and Care for Creation in the Age of Laudato Si” given by Dan Horan, OFM.) The November 18-19 workshop will be offered at the Joseph and Mary Retreat Center in Rancho Palos Verdes; the December 2-3 session will be given at the Sisters of Charity Motherhouse in Cincinnati. More information is available at: www.relforcon.org/programs/conversations-at-the-well for more information.

RFC’s next webinar, *Kindling the Energies of Love*, is scheduled for November 9 at 2 pm, Central Time. Maco Cassetta, CND, will be the presenter. More information

RFC Seeks Program Director

RFC is seeking a full-time program director, who will work collaboratively with the conference’s national office staff, advisory and program teams, and others to develop, design, market, coordinate, and implement programs for women and men religious engaged in the ministry of formation, as well as programs for newer members in initial formation and for the lifelong formation of seasoned members.

RFC has recently relocated to Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, a site rich in possibilities for collaboration with others committed to the flourishing of religious life.

Qualifications include a master’s level in theology or

an equivalent credential. The successful candidate will have experience in initial or lifelong formation ministry and/or faith formation as well as in program design, implementation, and evaluation, and some proficiency in technology, in particular with its use in instruction and training. More detailed information is available at www.relforcon.org/rfc-seeks-program-director.

To apply, please submit cover letter, resume, and three reference letters to Ellen Dauwer, SC, executive director, at rfc@relforcon.org. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, but preference will be given to applications received by October 17, 2016.

RCRI National Conference

October 11-14, 2016

Registration: www.trcri.org

Theme: Celebrating the Year of Mercy

- Keynote address by John L. Allen, Jr., editor of *Cruz*, specializing in coverage of the Vatican and the Catholic Church
- 38 workshops on a broad range of topics including finance, accounting, human resources, investment approaches, liability, corporate structures, Affordable Care Act, planning for the future, canonical options for governance, social media, tax exemption, aging, grieving, government regulations, immigration, real estate, eldercare, retirement, and canon and civil law issues facing religious institutes.
- Rev. Hank Lemoncelli, OMI, an official of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Life, will also give a workshop on the future of religious life.
- General session updates on legal matters, RCRI and NRRO

Pre-Conference Workshops

- Management Issues for New Leaders and Finance Personnel of Religious Institutes (October 11, full-day)
- TRENDS for Beginners and a Refresher for Users (afternoon)



NRVC Convocation Invitation

All vocation ministers, formators, communicators, those in religious leadership, and all who support vocations to consecrated life are welcome to attend our NRVC convocation to be held in Overland Park, Kansas from October 27-31. The event features four pre-convocation workshops, four convocation workshops, and three keynote presenters: Kevin O'Brien, SJ; Sherry Weddell; and Tom Rosica, CSB. There will be a special live-streamed event on October 30 at 2:00 PM (CT) featuring a panel of young religious and discerners that will be broadcasted by Salt + Light.

Additional information and registration materials are available at NRVC.net.

Search for a New NRVC Executive Director

NRVC has begun the search for a new executive director to replace Paul Bednarczyk, CSC, who served in this position for the past 14 years. Applicants must belong to a religious institute. A detailed job description and applicant requirements can be downloaded at NRVC.net.

Paul was elected as vicar general for the Congregation of Holy Cross and is residing in Rome. According to NRVC, his tenure at NRVC included significant capacity building grants to ensure the stability and growth of the organization as a leader in vocation ministry providing educational opportunities, relevant studies, resources, and advocacy. NRVC noted in a statement, "In the past two years, NRVC has expanded its staff and has a 16% increase in members, representing 365 religious institutes from 16 countries. His vision, leadership, and commitment to vocation ministry is greatly appreciated." He will be at the NRVC convocation to present the 2015 NRVC/CARA Study on the Role of the Family in Nurturing Vocations and for a final farewell.

The board has delegated responsibilities among board members and the NRVC staff. Board chair Ronald Hingle, SC will be NRVC's spokesperson; Deborah Borneman, SSCM, director of member relations and services, will oversee many day-to-day office operations.

NRRO Names New Executive Director

The National Religious Retirement Office is pleased to announce that Stephanie Still, PBVM, has been named executive director and will begin her service on October 3, 2016. Stephanie is a member of the Sisters of the Presentation in San Francisco, and she served as president of her order since 2010. Previously, she held positions within her community as communicator/vocations director 2004-2010 and councilor 1998-2004. She spent 11 years as a social studies teacher and director of marketing at Presentation High School in San Jose, California. She also served on the national board of LCWR as Region 14 chair from 2013 to 2016.





by Joan Mumaw, IHM
US Regional
Development Director

These are the Ones Who Stayed!

“The Church holds the keys to making peace in South Sudan,” according to John Ashworth, a special advisor to the South Sudan Council of Churches. “The Church commands universal respect and credibility. It has stayed with the people in their most brutal periods of fighting in the years since the British pulled out in 1056.”

Solidarity with South Sudan, a partner with the South Sudan Council of Churches, provides workshops on reconciliation and trauma healing. And in the work being done in the Teacher Training College and the Catholic Health Training Institute, peacemaking is an integral part of the curriculum. During this most recent period of civil unrest, most of the non-governmental

organizations evacuated all non-essential personnel. Yet the Solidarity staff opted to remain in their ministries. Both of the institutions noted above are filled to capacity with students from every ethnic group in the country. They are building the new nation from the ground up, one student at a time; students are learning the value of inter-cultural living and working as the basis for nationhood.

The work of Solidarity is supported by religious congregations from around the world. Some provide personnel; some provide resources to support the personnel and all continue to pray for the people of South Sudan and the safety of Solidarity staff. Thank you to all who are sharing personnel and resources. It costs approximately \$6500 per year to support a priest, brother or sister working with Solidarity in South Sudan. Perhaps you provide support for one religious courageous enough to remain with the people of this war-ravaged nation? We continue to seek support for this effort which is a response to the call of the bishops of South Sudan and Pope Francis’ continuing call to respond to the needs of those marginalized by war and oppression. For more information on how you can support this initiative contact: Joan Mumaw, IHM, president of Friends in Solidarity, representing Solidarity with South Sudan in the US (jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com) and follow us on Facebook and on the web.

www.solidarityfriends.org

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](#) 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@lcrw.org. Carol can also guide members through the process of signing up for the forum.