

October 2019

LCWR Assembly Imagines Leadership in a Global Community

The 2019 LCWR assembly, entitled **Imagining Leadership in a Global Community**, brought together in Scottsdale, Arizona 663 members along with more than 100 guests. Designed to provide leaders with information and inspiration, the assembly included speakers and processes that engaged the participants in the exploration of religious life leadership today as well as possible new directions for LCWR. A unique element of this year's assembly was the presence of the guests who included young religious, religious from a variety of ethnicities, facilitators who work with religious communities, and representatives of many of the national organizations serving religious life who added to the richness of the conversations.

The main speakers, Pat Murray, IBVM, executive secretary of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), and Sharlet Wagner, CSC, LCWR president, addressed the challenges and opportunities of leadership in a globalized world.

Several sessions of the assembly were dedicated to further reflection on trends occurring in society and religious life that shape the type of leadership that LCWR and its members must provide. The conference



▲ Pat Murray, IBVM



► Sharlet Wagner, CSC

has engaged in a multi-year process to reimagine itself as a relevant resource for religious life in this time of dramatic and rapid change. During the assembly the participants looked at the body of critical new insights into how religious life is shifting and changing and how these insights might direct LCWR's mission and services.

Weaving world and local realities into the assembly prayer, content, and conversations, the participants engaged in two actions to make their collective voice heard. In the first, the 663 members sent a [letter to President](#)

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From the LCWR Presidency

Exploring the LCWR Assembly Pearls

Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ — LCWR President-Elect

As I sit down to write this column, it has been one month since our wonderful assembly in Scottsdale. Since that time, I've been in numerous energizing and stimulating dialogues about all that transpired during those short, yet impactful days together.

The energy I experienced during the assembly has stayed with me. The powerful thought-provoking words of both Sharlet Wagner, CSC, and Pat Murray, IBVM, released a wellspring of challenge and opportunity for us to ponder and act upon as leaders of our congregations.

The work of the Contemporary Religious Life Committee's Essential Dimensions of Religious Life Leadership, and the Design Team's Emerging Orientations, have stirred the embers of curiosity and inspiration. In this column, I'll speak of some of how I've taken pieces of our assembly and shared them with my leadership team and with members of my congregation.

I started with the Contemporary Religious Life Committee's work of identifying the Essential Dimensions of Religious Life Leadership:

- Leadership for the Whole of Religious Life
- Mission and Vision
- Prophetic Engagement
- Nurturing Relationships
- Ensuring Stewardship of Temporal Good and Community Patrimony.

I reflected on these essential dimensions against the backdrop of my congregation's 2016 visioning statement. This visioning statement outlines four major areas of focus for our congregation and under each focus are identified behaviors and actions. While I found many correlations and congruence between these two documents, I also reflected on the gaps between the



two. There is much more to consider though I found this first step helpful in framing some questions for further dialogue with my own leadership team, as well as with the members of the congregation.

As is often heard, "timing is everything" and on my calendar for the first week of September was a four-hour time of reflection between my team and our initial formation team. I brought the five "Emerging Orientations" to this meeting: Global, Porous Borders, Integrative Partnerships for Religious Life and

Mission, Mission-Focus in the Public Square, and Technologically Astute

As our two teams, leadership and initial formation, pondered these orientations, I asked questions about what "global" might mean regarding the programs, education, and experiences provided for women in initial formation. I asked what "porous borders" might mean in terms of where women in initial formation live and minister. The "technologically astute" orientation is a part of everyday life for our newer members. We asked ourselves how might we more effectively use the digital platform for connecting more globally with our sisters in initial formation and others in initial formation around the world? How can we further the ministry of initial formation by web-watching and web-weaving? Both Pat and Sharlet spoke to the global sisterhood and this is where most newer members find themselves.

These are just a few initial steps into exploring the pearls from our time together at our national assembly. Leadership in these times call for us to continue the contemplative dialogue we (LCWR) have been about over these past years. The wisdom comes from our work within our teams and this work furthers all of religious life and brings us to new horizons as a collective whole; for we are a part of the global sisterhood!

LCWR Assembly Imagines Leadership in a Global Community

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Donald Trump beseeching him to end all divisive rhetoric. The conference shared the letter publicly and urged its members to share this letter with their local media outlets. (See article on page 4.)

In a second action, the members affirmed a resolution in which they committed for the next three years to continue to explore the root causes of injustice and, in particular, the intersection of racism, migration, and climate crisis, as well as the complicity of their congregations in these injustices. The resolution was affirmed after members listened to a panel on the intersection of these three matters by LCWR member Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN; Maria Elena Perales, director of the St. Joseph Justice Center for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange; and Joan Brown, OSF, executive director of New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light. Following the affirmation, the assembly participants were asked to implement the resolution by contacting that day President Trump and members of congress urging that they address these interrelated crises.

During the assembly the members elected new leadership for the organization. Elise Garcia, OP, a general councilor for the Adrian Dominican Sisters in Michigan was selected as the president-elect. Elected to the LCWR national board were Marcia Ann Fiutko, FSSJ; Susan Francois, CSJP; Jane Herb, IHM; Theresa Sandok, OSM; and Michelle Stachowiak, CSSF.

LCWR honored with its 2019 Outstanding Leadership Award Norma Pimentel, MJ, executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley and one of the nation's strongest champions of immigrants.



Susan Francois, CSJP moderates panel with Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN; Maria Elena Perales; and Joan Brown, OSF



Sheila Lemieux, CSJP and Miriam Ukeritis, CSJ share ideas about implementing new concepts of leadership



Norma Pimentel, MJ addresses the assembly after receiving the Outstanding Leadership Award

Making Their Voices Heard

Several members of LCWR followed through with the suggestion made at the LCWR assembly that they submit letters to the editor or opinion pieces to their local media outlets stating why they signed on to the LCWR letter to President Trump imploring him to stop his use of divisive rhetoric and use his position to promote healing and reconciliation. The following are links to just some of the pieces that were published:

- [Indianapolis Star](#) – Dawn Tomaszewski, SP; Lisa Stallings, SP; Mary Beth Klingel, SP; Jeanne Hagelskamp, SP; Jenny Howard, SP
- [LaCrosse Tribune](#) – Eileen McKenzie, FSPA
- [New York Times](#) - Antoinette Gutzler, MM
- [Pittsburgh Tribune Review](#) – Sharon Costello, CSJ
- Toledo Blade – Delores Gatliff, SND; Mary Jon Wagner, OSF; Sandra Sherman, OSU



Merci, Gracias, Thank You

The availability of translations of the 2019 assembly presentations into French and Spanish is possible because of the generosity of the following:

- Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio)
- Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
- International Union of Superiors General (UISG)

LCWR Assembly Resources

There are many resources available on [the LCWR website](#) to assist with exploring the LCWR assembly further. These include:

- Keynote Address: -- Pat Murray, IBVM (English, French, and Spanish versions are available.)
- Presidential Address: - Sharlet Wagner, CSC (English, French, and Spanish versions are available.)
- LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award Acceptance Remarks -- Norma Pimentel, MJ
- [Press release on the 2019 LCWR Assembly](#)
- [Letter to President Trump Regarding Divisive Rhetoric](#)
- [LCWR assembly resolution](#)
- [4-minute video capturing highlights of the LCWR assembly](#)

Available to LCWR member and leaders on the private side of the LCWR website are the following:

- LCWR Process Questions for Pat Murray's Address
- LCWR Process Questions for Sharlet Wagner's Address
- LCWR Process for Deconstruction/Recreation (Wooden Tower)
- LCWR Emerging Orientations
- LCWR Dimensions of Leadership
- LCWR Emergent Planning Process Handout

Portions of the assembly were livestreamed. The archived videos are available on [YouTube](#).

[Global Sisters Report](#) also has a number of articles related to the assembly:

- Extensive coverage of each day's events
- Feature on LCWR president [Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ](#)
- Feature on LCWR president-elect [Elise García, OP](#)
- Feature on LCWR executive director [Carol Zinn, SSJ](#)

LCWR Board, Region Chairs and Staff Gather in Scottsdale



The LCWR national board, regional chairs, and national office staff held a full-day meeting on August 12 at the assembly venue to share information and ideas among these three groups serving LCWR.

Helpful and honest conversation occurred as the participants looked the results of a survey that provided information on the effectiveness of the 15 LCWR regions and the challenges they face, and discussed the overall governance structure of LCWR. All were particularly interested in keeping the communication lines strong with the LCWR members, particularly given the changed make-up of the national board. Among the observations and suggestions offered were the following:

- The current governance structure of LCWR has great potential, but still needs to evolve in order to serve the conference effectively
- Communication between the national level of LCWR and the regional level and among the regions is key for the conference's future
- Possible ways to include the board and staff in regional meetings
- Effectiveness of video messages from the national level to the regional level
- A need for a thorough orientation for regional chairs
- Ideas for webinars and communication updates using various technologies

Post-Assembly National Board Meeting

The LCWR national board gathered after the LCWR assembly on August 18 and 19, with the LCWR staff present for the first day of the meeting. Among the matters discussed were the following:

- Debriefing of the 2019 LCWR assembly. Noted in particular were positive feedback about the two presentations, the presence of guests, livestreaming of some sessions, translation services, table processes, and the time allotted for relationship-building at the tables.
- Debriefing of the feedback from the LCWR emerging planning process and formulation of next steps.
- Initial conversation on the 2020 LCWR assembly.

The board also appointed three of its members to serve as liaisons to the 15 LCWR regions: Marcia Ann Fiutko, FSSJ; Susan Francois, CSJP; and Michelle Stachowiak, CSSF.



LCWR Reshapes its Transitional Ministry Services

LCWR's transitional services ministry, directed by Mary Hughes, OP and funded by a grant from the GHR Foundation, came to its five-year closure in September 2019. These services were available to congregations seeking ideas and assistance about how to best move into the future particularly as US religious life demographics change dramatically. The ministry offered during these years provided immeasurable support and guidance to more than 40 communities. What LCWR learned during these five years has significantly impacted the conference's plan for how to best serve its members for the next few years.

Many congregations are seeing that their pools of viable candidates for elected leadership are dramatically decreasing. As these congregations explore their capacity to sustain their own governance (especially canonical governance) and look for ways to creatively collaborate with other institutes, they are discovering that the connections are most likely to be with institutes that are nearby geographically. This important insight has now shaped the next steps for exploring how the transitional services ministry might best serve US religious life at this time.

LCWR requested additional assistance from the GHR Foundation to continue the transitional services ministry and is deeply grateful to the foundation for the approval of the request. The funding will allow LCWR to gather and share what has been learned thus far more fully in the format of five geographic gatherings of religious institutes to be held throughout the country in May and June 2020. Two gatherings will be on the east coast, two in the midwest, and one in the southeast.

Members are encouraged to stay alert for an email message in mid- or late October on the geographic gatherings and registration materials. In addition, LCWR will post a video on this matter on its website for leadership teams to view along with a reflection process.

LCWR Members Gather for Leadership Workshop

Forty-five LCWR members, from 19 congregations, gathered at the Carmelite Retreat Center in Darien, Illinois from September 16-18 for the LCWR workshop, Practicing Leadership: Embracing a Vital and Vibrant Future. This was an opportunity for entire teams and individual members of teams to gather in a contemplative manner and discern together what is most needed today in religious life leadership. How might the lens of the Paschal Mystery provide insight into the work of leaders ministering amid the major transformation religious life is being undergoing?

LCWR staff members Carol Zinn, SSJ and Marie McCarthy led the workshop. Information on future workshops is on page 7.



An Update on LCWR Programs

Registration is currently open for the following LCWR online programs.

Becoming the Leaders We Hope To Be: The Foundations of Transformational Leadership offers LCWR members the opportunity to join with a group of other leaders for an online learning experience guided by a seasoned leader who serves as a convener and mentor for the group.

Foundations for Becoming Transformational Leaders is an adaptation of *Becoming the Leaders We Hope To Be* that is designed to strengthen the leadership capacities of congregation members who are not currently in elected leadership.

A Guide To Facilitation: How To Increase the Odds of Having a Great Meeting is a brand new offering from LCWR. Among other things it includes attention to the challenges of intercultural facilitation, a series of short videos by facilitators who regularly work with LCWR communities looking at some of the common questions and concerns that arise in the process of facilitation and a template for use in facilitation.

Leadership teams may choose to register together as a group or individuals may register to join a group forming through LCWR. In addition, an already formed group, either a leadership team or a group of leaders from a variety of congregations, may contact Marie McCarthy, SP to register and begin the process as a group.

Rooted in God's Mission: The Foundations of Mission-Grounded Leadership among other things explores the meaning and place of mission, a theology and spirituality of mission, mission integration and ethical discernment and decision making.

Leading in an Evolving Universe offers members the opportunity to explore the implications of living in an evolving universe for their role as women religious leaders. Members can choose to join a self-directed learning cohort or to work individually with the material.

Fuller descriptions of each of these online opportunities are available on the members' side of the LCWR website under Leadership Pathways.

Registration for these opportunities will close September 28.

In addition to these online opportunities there are some opportunities for in-person workshops:

The annual **Leading from Within Retreat** will take place at the Redemptorist Retreat Center just outside Tucson, Arizona in January. Information on the retreat is on page 8.

The bi-annual **Imagining Justice** event which will be held at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center in Marriottsville, Maryland from April 20 to 23, 2020. This gathering will feature Carrie Newcomer who will help participants explore the deep grounding of the work for justice and the challenge of sustaining hope and energy for the work.

This event is open to justice promoters as well as leaders. An email will be sent to all LCWR members when registration opens.

Practicing Leadership: How To Embrace A Vital and Vibrant Future is a workshop intended to deepen and enhance the leadership experience for members who have been serving in elected leadership for two or more years. Some of the topics the workshop will explore include:

- Making the connection between vision and implementation
- Translating vision and meaning into practical responses
- Holding the tension of that which is emerging and that which is passing, tending well to both realities
- Shepherding the emergent while tending the emergencies
- Imagining and practicing a future full of hope

A fuller description of this workshop is available on the LCWR website under resources for members.

LCWR has scheduled two additional opportunities to participate in this workshop. There will be a **Practicing Leadership** workshop at the Mater Dolorosa Retreat house in Sierra Madre, California from May 11 to 13, 2020 and at the Bethany Retreat Center in Lutz, Florida from September 14 to 16, 2020. Members will be notified when registration opens for both workshops.

Leading from Within Retreat

Leading from Within is a retreat for LCWR members and LCWR associates who are serving in congregation leadership



January 12 — 17, 2020
Redemptorist Renewal Center
desertrenewal.org

Join with other women religious leaders for a five-day retreat that 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 group sharing and individual conversation with the directors.

Retreat Directors



Marie McCarthy, SP



Janet Mock, CSJ

Space is limited to 35 persons and just a few more spaces are available.

More information and registration materials can be found at lcwr.org/calendar/leading-within.

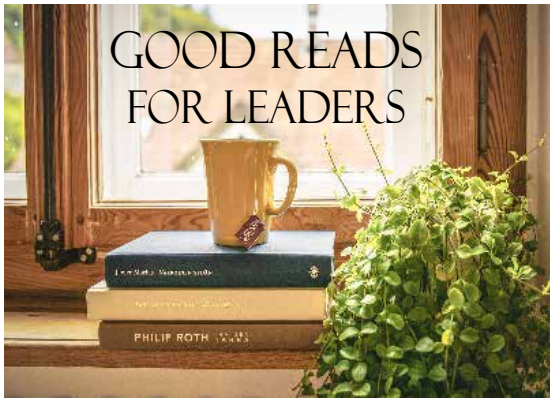


Cokie Roberts greets LCWR members at the conference's 2009 assembly held in New Orleans

LCWR Mourns the Passing of Cokie Roberts

After the death of journalist Cokie Roberts on September 17, LCWR issued a public statement mourning her loss and expressing gratitude for her many contributions to making the world a better place through her work and her presence. Cokie had lifelong friendships with many Catholic sisters and generously offered her support and expertise to LCWR over the years. The statement reads in part, "We stand as witnesses to what has been reported worldwide about her professional expertise, as well as her unfailing kindness and generosity. Our organization, as well as many of the women religious we represent, has deeply appreciated all that she brought to the world she served.... We are grateful for Cokie's many decades of exploring and probing how we can make the world a more just and moral setting for all people. Her tireless work as a reporter, commentator, analyst, columnist, speaker, and book author kept the most important questions facing humanity in our consciousness. The authenticity and integrity of her work will be appreciated for years to come."

"We offer our condolences to the Roberts family and to all of her friends and colleagues who feel Cokie's passing profoundly. Like you, we are so grateful that her beautiful spirit passed into our lives and into our organization." The entire statement may be read [here](#).



Dear America, Notes of an Undocumented Citizen

by Jose Antonio Vargas

Recommended by Margaret Magee, OSF

In early July as I read the St. Bonaventure University e-newsletter an item caught my interest. It was a notice on this year's All Bonaventure Reads book, *Dear America, Notes of an Undocumented Citizen*. Though unfamiliar with the author, Jose Antonio Vargas, it was the title, especially the words "Undocumented Citizen" that intrigued me enough to search for the book and to read it. Once I began reading, it was hard to put it down.

The story of Jose Antonio Vargas is compelling. He recounts his being sent to America as a young child from the Philippines by his mother to be cared for by his grandparents until she could join them. The adjustment to American life and schooling for the young and growing Jose was fine until as a high school student he tried to apply for a driver's license. Without telling his grandparents, Jose took his green card and other documents to the Department of Motor Vehicles only to find out that his papers had been falsified.

His story continues as he begins a deeper search for his own personal identity while seeking to prove that he could be a valuable and responsible member of American society. While keeping his undocumented status hidden, Jose chronicles his achievements in education, in job searches, and eventually becoming a recognized journalist, even winning a Pulitzer prize. The personal revelation of his struggles and achievements to be a valuable citizen of this country made me realize how often we take for granted our

native born status of citizenship. There are many undocumented citizens currently in the United States who are hard-working, law abiding persons, providing for their families and paying taxes.

This book is valuable in coming to understand and more deeply explore the current immigration and refugee issues, especially through the personal human stories of struggle and the desire for a better life.

LCWR Attends the National Black Sisters' Conference (NBSC)

LCWR executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ shares a moment with NBSC president Robert Fulton, SSMN at the NBSC conference in July in Baltimore, Maryland.



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Catholic Leaders Demand an End to Child and Family Detention

A coalition of 14 Catholic national organizations has launched a campaign to pressure the Trump administration and Congress to end the policies and practices that routinely traumatize immigrant children, particularly the policy of child and family detention. The campaign seeks to mobilize Catholics to take strategic action, and even risk arrest, to stop the inhumane policies and practices being perpetrated against immigrants by the current administration.

The campaign launched July 18 with the *Catholic Day of Action for Immigrant Children* in Washington, DC. The event brought together more than 200 Catholic sisters, priests, brothers and lay advocates who sang, prayed, and chanted as they demanded an end to the immoral and inhumane practice of detaining immigrant children.

The day began on the Capitol Lawn where LCWR executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ was among the speakers calling the crowd to prayer and action.

Carol reminded those gathered, “We are here today because of our faith. The Gospel message compels us to act now. The values of our own homeland, the United States of America, demand that we act now. The long history Catholic Sisters have had as immigrant communities themselves to this country and the two centuries of presence and ministry to the most vulnerable of God’s People prompt us to act now—to stand here and stay here until our faith and our values are respected and revered.”

The group then moved inside the Russell Senate Office Building Rotunda where they continued their prayer and witness. They carried with them the pictures of seven immigrant children who have died as a result of government negligence. Seventy members of the group refused police commands to end their prayer and leave the rotunda and were subsequently arrested.

On September 4, the coalition took the campaign to Newark, NJ where over 400 participants joined 50 Catholic leaders who risked arrest. After prayer at St. Mary’s Abbey Church the crowd processed to the offices of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in the Peter Rodino Federal Building.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, CSsR, Archbishop of Newark, accompanied the group throughout the day and gave a blessing to those participating in civil disobedience. In his remarks Cardinal Tobin reminded those gathered that, “We stand together in prayer and solidarity with our immigrant sisters and brothers. When they suffer, we suffer, the Church suffers, the Body of Christ suffers. We are one in the Lord and share in the very suffering of Christ.”



Ann Scholz, SSND, LCWR’s associate director for social mission, also addressed the crowd declaring, “We join the tens of thousands who are outraged at the horrific treatment of immigrant children and families by our own government. We are here today to say loudly and clearly, stop the inhumanity. The mistreatment of children, the separation of families, the denigration of our immigrant brothers and sisters done in our name must stop.” A video of civil disobedience in DC can be viewed [here](#) and photos of the Newark event [here](#).

Root Causes of Forced Migration Webinar

In March of this year, LCWR co-sponsored a pilgrimage of 72 faith leaders to Honduras in order to better understand the root causes of forced migration. They went to listen and learn from the people of Honduras about the conditions they face daily.

Last month, USCCB’s [Justice for Immigrants](#) campaign hosted a webinar where delegates, including LCWR staff member Ann Scholz, SSND, shared their insights from the trip and offered a report on the conditions in Honduras that push people from the homes and undertake the dangerous journey north.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

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

Mater Dolorosa Retreat House | Sierra Madre, CA
May 11 — 13, 2020

LCWR Assembly

Dallas, Texas
August 11 — 15, 2020

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

Bethany Center | Lutz, Florida
September 14 — 16, 2020

Leading from Within Retreat

San Pedro Retreat Center
Winter Park, Florida
January 10 – 15, 2021

LCWR New Leader Workshop

Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake | Mundelein, Illinois
March 25 — 28, 2021

LCWR Assembly

Orlando, Florida
August 10 — 13, 2021

Leading from Within Retreat

Redemptorist Renewal Center | Tucson, Arizona
January 16 — 21, 2022

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri
August 9 — 12, 2022

Refugee Resettlement Program Threatened

Under the Refugee Act of 1980, the number of refugees admitted to the United States is determined on an annual basis. Unlike most immigration laws, the President, in consultation with Congress, is given the power to determine the admissions number. The Trump administration set the Fiscal Year 2018 admissions goal at 45,000 persons, and 30,000 for Fiscal Year 2019, the lowest goal ever in the history of the modern refugee program. As the September 30 deadline for setting the admissions goal nears, there are reports that the administration may further cut the target number, leaving thousands of refugees without life-saving resettlement and threatening the very existence of the US Refugee Admission Program.



Last month LCWR joined 403 religious leaders and 108 faith-based organizations from across the United States and faith traditions to send a [letter](#) to the Trump administration demanding a restoration of the life-saving and bipartisan refugee resettlement program to historic norms. This comes following recent [reports](#) that the administration is considering zeroing out the refugee resettlement program, and [news](#) that the Trump administration is weighing a new discriminatory proposal that would allow states and localities to stop refugees from being resettled in their communities. The letter reads in part, “We are called by our sacred texts and faith principles to love our neighbor, accompany the vulnerable, and welcome the sojourner. Our congregations, synagogues, and mosques have historically played key roles in assisting refugees with housing, language, employment, and social supports necessary for rapid and effective resettlement into US communities. Yet, our commitment to offer refuge from violence and persecution requires our government to demonstrate the moral leadership upon which our nation was founded.”

The United States has the capacity to admit at least 95,000 refugees in the coming year and the need to do so is critical, both for individual refugees and for the interests of the United States. Continued reductions in refugee admissions keeps refugees needing resettlement in protracted unsafe situations and undermines US humanitarian commitments and leadership abroad.



- LCWR statement condemning recent mass shootings and imploring citizens and elected leaders to end the rage and division that too often result in indiscriminate violence. LCWR (8/6/19).
- Faith leaders' letter requesting that the interim final rule, *Asylum Eligibility and Procedural Modifications*, be withdrawn in its entirety. LCWR (8/6/19)
- Letter to the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee expressing concern about the administration's order to freeze as much as \$4 billion in congressionally-approved funds for foreign assistance and urging the committee to use its appropriations power to reject the potential rescission and to ensure that the funds are released in a timely fashion, as intended by Congress. LCWR (8/8/19)
- Letter asking the Mexican government to respect the rights of migrants and their defenders; to fully investigate and sanction the officials involved in harassing the staff at Casa del Migrante de Saltillo and staff at other shelters; and to fully and effectively carry out all protective measures granted to this shelter and to other shelters. LCWR (8/12/19)
- Letter to President Trump and leaders of Congress demanding that they act now to ban the civilian use of assault weapons, high capacity magazines, and bump stocks. LCWR (8/16/19)
- Open letter from LCWR members calling on President Trump to end his divisive and polarizing rhetoric. LCWR (8/14/19)
- Quote in the Interfaith Immigration Coalition press release strongly opposing the administration's efforts to discard the Flores Settlement Agreement safeguards which protect the welfare of migrant children in U.S. government custody. Carol Zinn, SSJ (8/21/19)
- Amicus Brief of religious organizations in support of plaintiffs in a case before the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals challenging the diversion of funds to construct the border wall on the southern border. LCWR (8/22/19)
- Letter to Congress asking them to withhold funding from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that enables them to conduct raids, separate families, and detain children and families. Ann Scholz, SSND (8/28/19)
- Letter to Congress urging support for the *Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act* (HR 1146) which restores protections to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. LCWR (9/4/19)
- Comment in opposition to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) proposed rule that would eliminate the ability for states to broaden their SNAP eligibility. Ann Scholz, SSND (9/6/19)
- Letter to United Nations Secretary General Guterres, as the UN prepares for its Climate Action Summit 2019, calling for a global ban on fracking. LCWR (9/8/19)
- Letter to House Democrats urging them to co-sponsor *the Working Families Tax Relief Act* (HR 3157), which would help millions of struggling working families and low-income children by expanding the highly effective *Earned Income Tax Credit* (EITC) and the *Child Tax Credit* (CTC). LCWR (9/13/19)
- Letter to Senators urging them to support efforts to help millions of struggling families by including the Ways and Means Committee's EITC and CTC improvements in any final tax extenders agreement this year. LCWR (9/13/19)
- Letter to House and Senate appropriators urging them to ensure that in Fiscal Year 2020 Congress cuts the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)'s budget for detention, enforcement, and border militarization, while putting accountability measures in place to stop the agency's pattern of abuse of the appropriations process. LCWR (9/10/19)
- Letter from faith leaders asking House and Senate leaders to include a prohibition on unauthorized war with Iran in the final agreement on a National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2020. Carol Zinn, SSJ (9/13/19)



Women Religious Connect Worldwide for the Pan-Amazon Synod

The International Union of Superiors General (UISG) is inviting congregations worldwide to unite together in prayer for the Pan-Amazon Synod taking place in Rome from October 6-27. Among the opportunities offered by UISG are the following:

- Two prayer reflections online on Tuesdays, October 8 and 24 at 8:00 AM ET.
- Webinar: “Sowing Hope for the Planet: Amazon” on Wednesday, October 16
- Meeting online and at UISG “The Synod Through the Eyes and Hearts of the Religious Sisters who Attended the Synod” on Monday, October 28 (There will be 20 women religious present at the synod, 10 of whom were nominated by UISG)

Links for the events online: [English](#), [Español](#), [Italiano](#), [Français](#)

In Rome, the Network for the Pan-Amazon Region (REPAM) will open the [Tent for Our Common Home](#) in the Church of Traspontina (Via della Conciliazione, very close to St Peter’s Basilica) where the indigenous people and others attending the synod will meet for prayer and conversation. UISG is encouraging women religious around the world to build a symbolic tent in their own communities as a reminder to pray for the synod. All are invited to share a photo of their symbolic tent with a short prayer and/or their hopes for the synod through *WhatsApp* +39 349 935 87 44.

The [UISG blog](#) and other UISG social media platforms will include reflections and news from the 10 women religious who will attend the synod as UISG representatives. (#SinodoAmazonico -- #SowersOfPropheticHope -- #SowingHopeForOurPlanet)

Nuns Healing Hearts Exhibit Celebrates 10th Anniversary of Talitha Kum

The Nuns Healing Hearts campaign was launched on May 10, 2019 by Pope Francis. The campaign marks the 10th anniversary of Talitha Kum, the international network of women religious dedicated to ending the practice of human trafficking and exploitation around the world. Today, the network spans 77 countries and involves over 2,000 religious who are actively involved in the struggle to end trafficking. Their work focuses on prevention of both labor and sex trafficking and the accompaniment of survivors.



As part of its anniversary celebration, Talitha Kum helped Lisa Kristine, an [international humanitarian photographer](#), document this ministry. The exhibit was unveiled at the Vatican launch of the campaign.

It was displayed again on July 30 at the United Nations in New York City as part of the UN’s commemoration of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. The exhibit may be displayed at other locations, but the primary focus will be [online](#). The campaign will raise money for Talitha Kum through the sale of photographs and donations.

This exhibition illustrates the work of sisters in Guatemala, Mexico, Philippines, Thailand, Italy and the United States. A video tour of the exhibit produced by the Communicators for Women Religious can be viewed [here](#). Proceeds from the sale of the photographs will be used to support the work of the Talitha Kum Network.



Updates from NRRO

In addition to distributing the proceeds of the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, the National Religious Retirement Office strives to furnish [resources and services](#) that help religious institutes enhance eldercare and plan for ongoing retirement needs. For example, our [Tending the Vineyard \(TTV\) property planning series](#) offers five videos and accompanying support materials to promote effective property planning. Funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, this self-paced program features guidance from property experts and insights from religious who have completed congregational property initiatives. Another helpful resource is NRRO's [annual statistical report](#), which provides an overview of the retirement landscape for US religious communities.

NRRO's free, quarterly webinar series furnishes continuing education on eldercare for leadership and care personnel. The [next webinar](#) is scheduled for November 12 and aims to help care staff gain a better understanding of how and why various Catholic practices are important to women and men religious.



Catholic Energies, IGS Solar, Catholic Charities of DC Partner to Build Solar Project

In July, IGS Solar and [Catholic Energies](#) announced that they will build the largest solar ground array and pollinator field project approved for construction to-date in the District of Columbia for the benefit of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington (CCADW).



In response to Pope Francis's call to combat climate change and to serve as good stewards of the environment, CCADW will host the 2-megawatt system that will produce nearly 100% of their current power requirements and offset nearly 3,400 tons of CO2 emissions per year. This solar project was created, developed, and managed by Catholic Energies, a service of the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#) (CCC). The Covenant, of which LCWR is a core member, was formed in 2006 to address growing ecological awareness and the need to implement Catholic social teaching on ecology.

Catholic Energies, provides turnkey project development services and expertise as well as access to financial resources at no cost to Catholic organizations nationwide wishing to install solar power and other energy-efficiency equipment.



Webinar: Being A Sign of Courageous Hope: Practicing Compassionate Listening

Presenter: Marianne Farina, CSC

Tuesday, October 15 at 2:00 PM ET

In this webinar, Marianne will share her experience and teaching of a practice called compassionate listening. The practice grew out of work facilitated by Leah Green (rooted in the work of Quaker Gene Knudsen Hoffman) with reconciliation leaders on the ground in Israel – Palestine beginning in 1991. The reconciliation work

in Israel-Palestine was adapted for peacebuilding in everyday life and the Compassionate Listening Project began in the US in 1999. Marianne has presented the practice to formation personnel participating in the RFC *ForMission* Program.

Marianna, a member of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana, is a professor of theology and philosophy and a member of the core doctoral faculty at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California.

[Registration and additional information](#)

News from the UN

October 2—*International Day of Nonviolence* marks the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. The day is an opportunity to reaffirm the universal relevance of the principle of nonviolence and the desire to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding, and nonviolence.



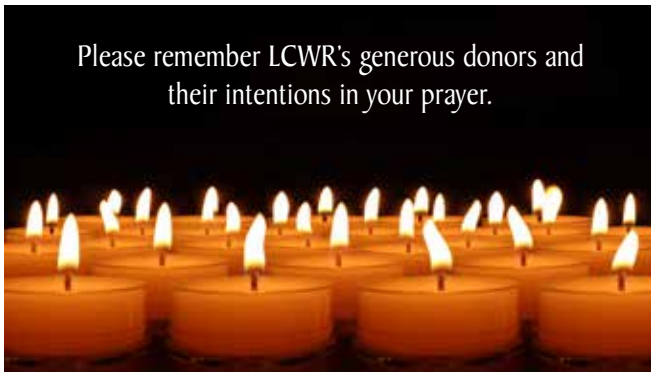
October 11—*International Day of the Girl Child* is celebrated annually to highlight issues concerning the gender inequality facing young girls. This year's theme is "GirlForce: Unscripted and Unstoppable."

October 16—*World Food Day* 2019 will focus on achieving #ZeroHunger by 2030. Zero hunger means working together to ensure everyone, everywhere, has access to the safe, healthy, and nutritious food they need.

October 17—*International Day for the Eradication of Poverty* this year's theme: "Acting together to empower children, their families and communities to end poverty" celebrates the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

October 24—*United Nations Day* marks the 74th 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.

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



The NRVC Fall Institute will be held October 8-23 with four workshops intended for those who support vocations to religious life. New this year is the Art of Accompaniment and Discernment, offered October 21-23. The central focus of this workshop is for participants to magnify the message that "the mission of many consecrated men and women who take care of the lowliest on the world's peripheries manifest concretely the dedication of an outward-looking Church" (*Final Document of the Synod of Bishops*, 88). Topics include research and practical applications in ministering with young Catholics, the changing cultural and ethnic mix of candidates, and the need for deep discernment as a lifelong practice. The presenters are: Thu Do, LHC; Thomas Gaunt, SJ, Charlotte McCorquodale; and Mary Rowell, CSJ. [More information and registration](#) materials are available.

The [National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations](#) (NFCRV) recently provided scholarships for eight women and men entering religious life to pay off their student loans during initial formation. Since its inception in 2015, the NFCRV has issued 39 grants in excess of \$650,000 to religious institutes to alleviate educational debt. Applications for 2020 will open in January.

The third phase of the NRVC/CARA Recent Trends in Vocations to Religious Life study is coming to completion with eight focus groups around the country with more than 100 newer members who entered between 2003-2018. Phase one included survey responses from 67% of major superiors while phase two involved 63% of newer members. The completed study results will be available early next year.

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.



by Joan Mumaw, IHM
President
www.solidarityfriends.org

The recent LCWR and UISG Assemblies provided a great opportunity to meet many of you and to thank you personally for your generous support of our work with Solidarity in South Sudan. It also was a time to meet new leaders and to introduce them to Friends... and Solidarity. We welcome all congregations to join us in this initiative which is the work of religious from around the world. For the latest newsletter use [this link](#). September is traditionally a time when we all “go back to school.” For many of us our lives revolved around the school calendar. So, too, in South Sudan. The Solidarity Teacher Training College (STTC) celebrated the graduation of 19 new teachers in August. The STTC recently received high praise from the director general of the Ministry of Education in South Sudan, who remarked on the integrity of the school’s final exam process and knowledge of the students.

During the short-term break, the Catholic Medical Mission Board Office in Yambio provided two child

safety workshops involving 92 students. This issue is becoming increasingly important in South Sudan as it evolves out of civil conflict. Gender-based violence and conflict resolution workshops were also held during the break for the entire college enrollment of 100 students. As the new term begins, students have access to 15 new laptops in the computer lab, funded by the Hilton Fund for Sisters, through the sponsorship of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Atlantic-Midwest Province. We are grateful for this addition to the college offerings and for the support of SSND which has two sisters on site in South Sudan.

A quote from one of our students, John Dau, sums up the work of the STTC in primary teacher education, “Teachers are role models and peace builders — they are the ones who understand the learners and are the ones who are at the grassroots, in the communities, and are able to bring change through education.”

We invite you to support the work of Friends in Solidarity as we, in turn, support religious and lay volunteers in South Sudan training teachers, nurses, midwives, farmer and pastoral workers. We are grateful for personnel, financial contributions and prayerful support offered by you and your congregations. More information is available from jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com or www.solidarityfriends.org.

Have You Registered for the LCWR Resource Sharing Forum?

The forum is a listserv that is open only to LCWR members and associates. This listserv is a means for LCWR members and associates to communicate with one another online with a question or to share information. When you post a message to this forum it will go to all members who are participating.

The listserv has been an invaluable tool for members seeking information on a variety of topics such as speakers and facilitators; sample policies on housing, retirement, transportation; consultants on building and property renovation; information on sponsorship; group processes; and many other needs.

Information for signing up may be found on the Members’ section of the LCWR website.