



June 2020

LCWR Plans Online Assembly for August 2020

This year's LCWR assembly will be offered online due to the pandemic and the uncertainty of when both travel and large gatherings will be safe.

While the assembly theme, **God's Infinite Vision: Our Journey to the Borders and Beyond**, remains the same, the content and format will be different from what had been planned for the in-person gathering. The following is a description of the new plans thus far.

Online Assembly

August 12, 13, and 14

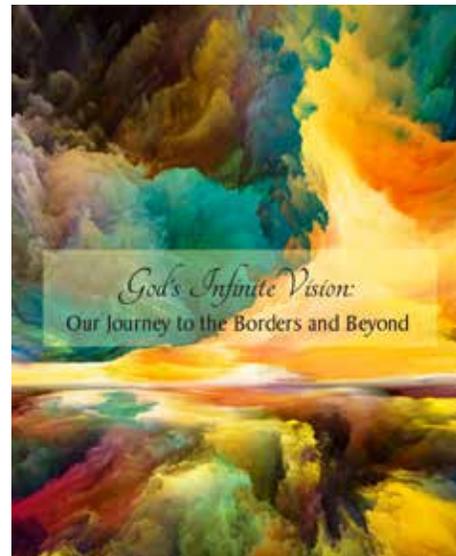
No more than four hours per day

Through collective prayer and ritual, presentations time for silent reflection, and multiple opportunities for contemplative dialogue with one another, participants will look at:

- What does it mean to be in leadership at such a fragile, uncertain time?
- What might participants learn from one another?
- What new opportunities is the pandemic providing to change the world to better align with God's infinite vision?
- What might women religious be called to be and do in this new time?

Assembly 2020 Registration

Registration information for the assembly will be sent to all members and associates soon.



Pre-Assembly Opportunities

As preparation for this assembly, LCWR will offer resources to members and associates to reflect on their own experiences of the pandemic.

In addition, opportunities will be provided - for those who wish - to meet online to share on these topics together. Two 75-minute zoom sessions are being prepared and will be offered throughout the months of June and July, for those who would like to prepare for the assembly together. Members and associates will have the opportunity of participating on dates convenient for them.

June

"Transforming Our Individual and Collective Grief and Trauma for the Sake of the World"

July

"Integrating Our Personal and Collective Vulnerability Into Our Service of Leadership Within Our Institutes and Beyond"

From the LCWR Presidency

What is Arising from this Holy Disquietude?

Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ — LCWR President

Just after Easter, as I sat looking out my bedroom window, I could see the signs of spring vividly blooming in the bougainvillea, gazanias, hibiscus, and many other flowers whose names I don't know! This beauty was a bit disquieting to me as I sat with the growing river of feelings that continually swirl within.

Within eyesight of my bedroom is St. Joseph Hospital in Orange; I hear the sirens bringing the newly COVID-infected to the emergency room. Just across the street from our hospital is CHOC – Children's Hospital of Orange County. I wonder, is it my imagination or am I hearing the swirling sounds of the helicopter as it lands on top of the hospital much more than what I used to experience before this pandemic.

The pictures from the news invade my attempt to settle into prayer and meditation. I wrestle with the internal struggle of numbing myself against the heart-wrenching death toll that continues to grow each day. Then I allow the resurrection stories to unfold in images that balance the enormity of the suffering. I see the generosity of all those willing to rush into harm's way to care and serve during this time of crisis. I allow the pictures of our elders, newer members, and everyone in between who have found ways to contribute to and embody our call to love one another as God has loved us. I'm buoyed up by the selfless acts of kindness from everyday men, women, and children.

As a leader in this moment in time, I look to the future with hope and imagination. Out of the darkest days of this pandemic, a new dawn is bursting forth that



Out of the darkest days of this pandemic, a new dawn is bursting forth that stretches and invites us to something new.



stretches and invites us to something new. The holy disquietude that most of us are experiencing creates the soil from which a new understanding of what being and living globally truly means. Are not our hearts burning?

As we continue to work on "flattening the curve," my deep desire is that we flatten the real and imaginary borders within and around us. What can we learn about ourselves and one another through our shared experiences of this pandemic? There are so many images where our humanity is touching God's divinity through connections with one another across the world.

If the automotive industry can shift from making cars to ventilators, how might we, as women religious pivot in a new direction, a path that is

calling us from just beyond the horizon? Ingenuity, creativity, bold faith, and foresight are in the DNA of women religious. May we tap into our imaginations and unfurl a new sense of what we mean by a "ministry of presence" virtually and in places we might not have considered prior to this pandemic. May we tap into a new sense of what it means to be global

when travel is curtailed. May we tap into our patrimony of faith, courage, foresight, trust, and creativity as we slowly emerge from "safer at home" and establish new patterns of connections in a world forever changed.

As we move toward our online assembly in August, let us do so with an energy grounded in faith, perseverance, fortitude, courage, hope, and love.

Resources Created to Assist in the Pandemic

LCWR continues to send an update each Monday to all members and associates with news and resources pertaining to the pandemic. Included in these updates are the following:

- A prayer/reflection that invites people to reflect on how the pandemic is transforming lives – personally and collectively. Through the generosity of the Sisters of Providence of Montreal and the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, most of these reflections are also available in Spanish and French. LCWR encourages leaders to share these resources with others.
- Dates and times of optional contemplative dialogue sessions for leaders wishing to pray and reflect together on the LCWR weekly reflection sheet.
- A weekly suggested legislative advocacy action to assure that the needs of society’s most vulnerable are being met during the pandemic.

All of these resources, as well as others are available on [the LCWR website](#).

In addition, the website of the [Resource Center for Religious Institutes](#) has a number of documents available that answer questions frequently asked by religious congregations on pandemic-related matters.

Discernment about Holding Fall LCWR In-Person Events

In light of the ongoing uncertainty of the impact of COVID-19 and when it might be safe to travel and hold large-group gatherings, LCWR continues to discern whether to hold any of its future events as in-person gatherings. This discernment will continue to be guided by the data provided by national public health and safety professionals. As of this time, the September "Practicing Leadership Workshop" has been cancelled.

Members will continue to be updated about the status of LCWR events for the fall season – including the regional meetings.

Responding to Those Severely Impacted by COVID-19

As so many in this nation and around the world are suffering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, LCWR draws the attention of members to some avenues for offering assistance.

Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA)

CCUSA is particularly concerned about the food shortage that looms for the millions of families struggling to feed their children, especially in areas that receive little or no media attention. Donations to CCUSA may be sent to:

Catholic Charities USA

Mr. Anthony Sciacca
Chief Development Officer
Catholic Charities USA
2050 Ballenger Avenue
Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314

Indicate your donation is for **Food Security in COVID-19 Crisis**

International Union of Superiors General (UISG)

UISG welcomes contributions that will help respond to immediate needs of women religious in Italy, France, and Spain. Many religious congregations in these countries are in dire need of resources to care for their members suffering from COVID-19. UISG has established a fund to respond directly to the needs of these sisters.

Information is available on the private side of the LCWR website for [transferring donations directly to the UISG bank account](#).



UISG Begins Series of Webinars on Reimagining the Future

On May 13, the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) initiated a new series of webinars in which the leadership of religious conferences across the world are sharing updates on the lives and mission of religious in their countries, particularly as they are impacted by the pandemic, and their plans for the future. The first webinar was on religious life in the United States and included presentations by the three LCWR presidents: Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ; Elise Garcia, OP; and Sharlet Wagner, CSC; and by the executive director, Carol Zinn, SSJ. [A recording of the video](#), "Re-imagining the Future: Religious Life in the United States," is available on the UISG website. Additional webinars will feature women religious from conferences in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa. All will be available for viewing on the [UISG website](#).

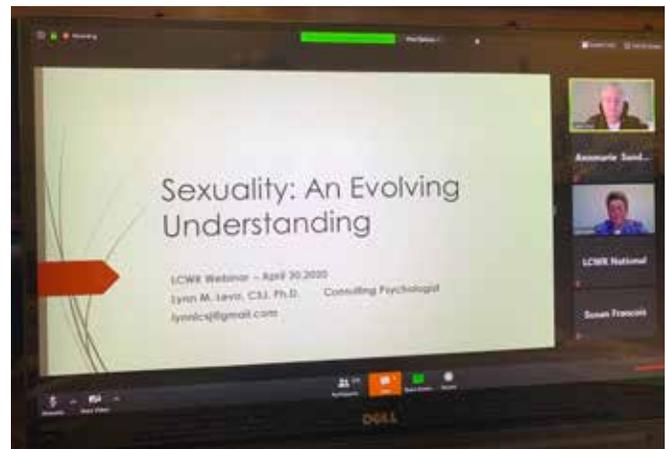
UISG executive secretary Pat Murray, IBVM reported that UISG will be preparing a process that will invite all women religious throughout the world into a global discernment about the future. These materials will be available on the UISG website. Also on the site are recordings of a number of recent free webinars – many of which pertain to supporting religious life during the pandemic.



UISG executive secretary Pat Murray, IBVM facilitates "Re-imagining the Future: Religious Life in the United States" webinar with LCWR's officers.

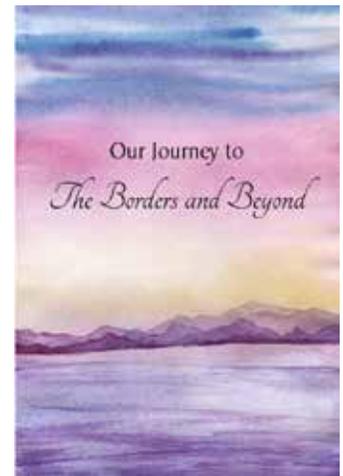
LCWR Webinar Receives Positive Feedback

More than 430 LCWR members participated in LCWR's webinar, "Sexuality: An Evolving Understanding" on April 30 with Lynn M. Levo, CSJ. A survey sent to all participants at the close of the webinar showed that leaders found the presentation very helpful. The survey results also indicated a desire for additional education on topics related to sexuality and interest in continuing to use the webinar format of delivery. LCWR will be working with those results to develop other resources.



Ordering Summer 2020 Occasional Papers

Pre-orders of the next issue of LCWR's *Occasional Papers* are due by June 5 and [may be placed here](#). This next issue, *Our Journey to the Borders and Beyond*, will be an important edition that looks at the call to religious in these chaotic and rapidly changing times. What does the world -- in all its changing dimensions -- most need for women religious to be? A highlight of this issue is an interview with the poet, David Whyte.



Translations of LCWR Articles and Resources

Due to the generosity of others, LCWR is able to provide some translations into languages other than English of articles that may be of interest to women religious leaders.

- Attachments:**
- 1 Una entrevista con John Paul Lederach
 - 2 El papel de la creación de significado en tiempos de transición - Ted Dunn
 - 3 La rita de la creación de sentido -- Ted Dunn
 - 4 Entrar dans une communauté plus profonde -- Liz Sweeney, SSJ
 - 5 2019 年 12 月 13 日 Mapping in Mystery -- Nancy Schreck, OSF and Carole Sherrick, SSND (Korean)
 - 6 El Sermón transformador del evangelio -- Sheila Lemaire, CSJ (Spanish)
 - 7 La sombra de la muerte y el amor desde la vida -- Rebecca Ann Gemma (Spanish)
 - 8 "El misterio y el arte de vivir" -- Entrevista con Kaita Toppet (Spanish)
 - 9 El misterio del amor en la vida cotidiana -- Gail Storz (Spanish)
 - 10 Entrevista con el Dr. C. Otto Scharmer (Spanish)
 - 11 Entrevista con la Dra. Cynthia Bourgeault (Spanish)
 - 12 Buscando Nuestros Santos en Tiempos de Oscuridad -- Entrevista con Constance Fitzgerald, OCD (Spanish)
 - 13 Vivir una Vida de Discernimiento - Entrevista con Margaret Wheatley (Spanish)
 - 14 Transformación de la vida religiosa -- Ted Dunn (Spanish)
 - 15 La puissance transformative de l'engagement contemplatif - Catherine Bertrand, SSND (French)
 - 16 Diálogo Contemplativo -- Catherine Bertrand, SSND
 - 17 Mapeando el Misterio -- Carole Sherrick, SSND & Nancy Schreck, OSF
 - 18 Mapeando o Mistério -- Carole Sherrick, SSND & Nancy Schreck, OSF (Portuguese)
 - 19 Ingressando en la Comunidad Más Profunda -- Liz Sweeney, SSJ
 - 20 Cultivar los dones en lugares sagrados -- Marie McCarthy, SP
 - 21 Faire ressortir les dons dans des ambiances saines -- Marie McCarthy, SP
 - 22 La disciplina del discernimiento comunitario -- Carole Sherrick, SSND
 - 23 La discipline du discernement communautaire -- Carole Sherrick, SSND
 - 24 Sophia: Source d'union créatrice -- Kathy Duffy, SSJ
 - 25 Navegación con los Cambios -- LCWR Reflection Book
 - 26 El Voto a la Obediencia -- Gary Riess Estrella
 - 27 La Voto à l'obéissance -- Gary Riess Estrella
 - 28 Una entrevista con Julio Canella
 - 29 Une interview de Judy Canella
 - 30 Conduire le changement avec succès -- Lynn Lewis, CSJ
 - 31 Former des responsables en ces temps de changements - Interview with Nancy Schreck, OSF and Eileen Campbell, KSH
 - 32 Interview with Eileen Campbell, OSF
 - 33 La discernement communautaire -- Carole Sherrick, SSND - FRENCH
 - 34 Discernimento Comunitario -- Carole Sherrick, SSND
 - 35 Discernimento Comunitario -- Carole Sherrick, SSND (Portuguese)
 - 36 Información sobre Diálogo Contemplativo
 - 37 Transcripción de la Introducción a Diálogo Contemplativo -- Liz Sweeney, SSJ
 - 38 Navegando la Llegada de la Posibilidad Future Más Alta -- Carole Sherrick, SSND (Spanish)
 - 39 Nouv'Évangile dans le lieu de la mort -- Jan Richardson

Update on Rivers of Hope/Ríos de Esperanza

The two upcoming sessions of the program, **Rivers of Hope/Ríos de Esperanza**, have been cancelled due to the uncertainties of travel and gathering at this time. This program, sponsored by several organizations serving religious life, including LCWR, was to be held in July and October 2020. The program planning team will be looking at alternatives and will be in contact with all who had applied for the program.



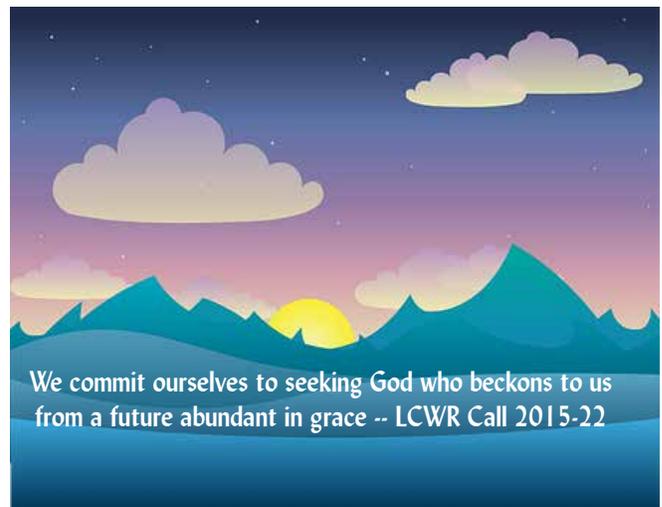
New Translated Articles Available on the LCWR Website

Over the years, several congregations have generously contributed translations of LCWR articles and resources into other languages.

Three articles have been added to the “Translated Articles” section of the LCWR website:

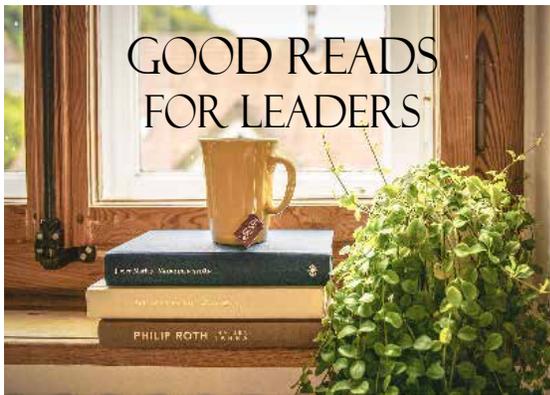
- “The Role of Meaning-Making in Transitional Times” by Ted Dunn (*Occasional Papers*, Summer 2019) in French and Spanish -- *Provided by the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity*
- “Developing the Capacity to Birth Something New: An Interview with John Paul Lederach” in Spanish (*Occasional Papers*, Winter 2020) -- *Provided by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary*

LCWR welcomes translations of its materials that religious institutes would be willing to share so that others can benefit.



Update is an official publication of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious published monthly and distributed to members nationally. All rights reserved © 2020 LCWR

Editor: Annmarie Sanders, IHM
 8737 Colesville Road, Suite 610
 Silver Spring, MD 20910
 Phone: 301-588-4955 Fax: 301-587-4575
 E-mail: asanders@lcwr.org Website: lcwr.org



Conflict Unraveled: Fixing Problems at Work and in Families

by Andra Medea

Recommended by Johanna Rickl, CHM

Today there are lots of conflicts to be unraveled but Andra Medea offers a unique insight into the subject: the understanding of ourselves as humans with many carryovers from our ape ancestors. She unveils a deeper understanding of “fight or flight” syndrome that provides tools for bringing our rational mind back into situations where it has temporarily gone on vacation.

The first chapter, “Adrenaline Overload: Flooding,” states that “flooding shorts out most of the higher parts of the brain and leaves people acting irrational, mule-headed, defensive or quarrelsome.” However, it is chemical, not character, that is the problem. And if you plan to resolve any conflicts, you must first learn how to control your own flooding.

While the book is based on much serious research, the chapters break the information into understandable sections that will allow any reader to identify examples of self-experienced situations. The author’s use of many stories and her playful sense of humor make this an interesting, informative, and fun read.

Her approach encourages the reader to believe that one really can learn to apply respectful and nonviolent methods to manage or resolve conflicts that arise in everyday life. I found that to be a great source of hope in navigating the myriad challenges that readily emerge as sisters engage each other in community and team members strive to bring a project to fruition.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly

Online

August 12, 13, 14 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

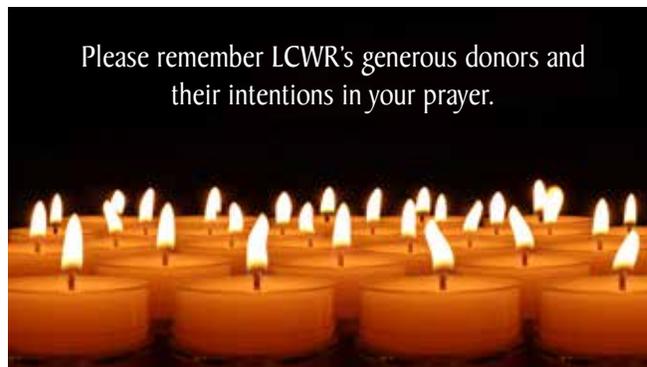
January 16 — 21, 2022

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri

August 9 — 12, 2022

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



House Passes \$3 Trillion COVID-19 Relief Bill

The House passed the latest COVID-19 relief bill, the [Heroes Act](#) (HR 6800) along party lines. The legislation, which would provide nearly \$3 trillion in additional resources to address the coronavirus pandemic will likely never become law, but it does provide a starting point for negotiations.



This comes as the country continues to struggle to meet the demand for the testing, contact tracing, and trust needed to flatten the COVID-19 curve and as unemployment grows to 14 percent, the highest rate since the Great Depression, even higher for [Black \(16%\) and brown \(18%\) people](#).

The bill, which the House passed on May 15, goes a long way toward addressing some of the limitations of earlier relief legislation by providing:

- Testing, tracing and treatment, to all regardless of immigration status; funding for nursing home 'strike teams' to help manage outbreaks; and health coverage to Americans losing their employer-provided health insurance.
- Food security with a 15 % increase in SNAP benefits; additional funding for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); and financial relief to school meal providers and USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Programs.
- Housing assistance to help struggling families afford a safe place to live.
- Additional direct payments to all including those who pay taxes using a taxpayer identification number.
- Funding to state, local, territorial, and tribal governments to pay vital workers; hazard pay for essential workers; and extended unemployment benefits.
- Payroll protection that encourages employers to keep employees on payroll; worker safety protections; emergency aid to livestock and poultry producers; and creation of a federal dairy donation program to prevent milk dumping as millions go hungry.
- Safeguards to ensure safe elections, an accurate Census, and to preserve the Postal Service.
- Environmental justice grants to EPA to examine

the prevalence of coronavirus in high-pollution districts.

- Grants to the National Endowment for the Arts and state and regional arts organizations.

While the bill does not include general infrastructure spending as a mid-pandemic stimulus, the legislation does contain several infrastructure provisions including expansion of broadband; a ban on utility companies cutting off water and electricity during the crisis; and funding to help low-income families pay their power and water bills.

Despite the breadth of the bill and its very hefty price tag, it fails to include a number of critical components including targeting rules in all health care and other federal funding so that federal help gets to the hardest hit communities of color, particularly black, Latinx, and native people; COVID-related international assistance; and refugee-related protections.

Good News for Women Seeking Asylum in the United States

In a major development in US asylum law, a federal appeals court [recognized](#) gender as a legal basis for granting asylum, making it possible for the petitioner in this case, and many other women fleeing violence in their home countries, to find refuge in the United States according to an article in *Harvard Law Today*, "[Years of advocacy by HIRC culminate in landmark decision by First Circuit.](#)"

The decision overturned the rejection of an asylum claim filed by Jacelys Miguelina de Pena-Paniagua, who escaped the Dominican Republic after suffering years of domestic violence. Although the ruling's immediate effect is to return de Pena's case to the Board of Immigration Appeals for further review, the principles the court cited in doing so ensure the decision will serve as an important precedent for many current and future asylum seekers.

The case was heard before the US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit Court. Arguments filed by the Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinical Program (HIRC) in an amicus brief cited by the court largely formed the basis of its ruling on the viability of gender-based claims. Other amicus briefs were filed by various advocates for women and immigrants including Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., and LCWR.

CDC Rule Bans Immigrants Unnecessarily

Many immigrant advocates believe the Trump administration is exploiting the coronavirus crisis to pursue its long-held goal of preventing refugees from seeking and receiving humanitarian protection in the United States. Under the guise of a much-criticized Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) order, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is expelling asylum seekers and unaccompanied children without the legally required processes to countries where they face persecution, trafficking, and other serious violence. With little public debate, the administration has essentially eliminated asylum at the US-Mexico border.



In late April several faith-based organizations who work directly with immigrants and refugees submitted comments on the interim final rule promulgated by the CDC. The rule, combined with an order also issued by the CDC, has blocked all asylum applications at US borders, citing the coronavirus pandemic.

LCWR was one of many organizations that submitted comments challenging the rule. Together, these organizations pointed out that the rule and order violate numerous legal requirements the United States must observe; rely on age-old anti-immigrant stereotypes; have no actual public health value; put children and adults fleeing violence in harm's way; and offend moral and religious values.

In its comments LCWR pointed out that, "Both [the interim final rule and the order] violate our deeply held religious beliefs and impede our ability to fulfill our commitment to treat all people with dignity and respect, especially those who are most vulnerable including asylum seekers and unaccompanied children."

Again speaking to the weak public health justification behind these policies, LCWR's comment continued, "We know from our own experience of working with immigrants along the Southwest border that the vast majority of asylum-seekers have relatives or friends in the United States where they could safely self-isolate, if

necessary. An October 2019 study of 607 asylum-seekers subject to the Remain in Mexico program found that nearly 92 percent had family or close friends in the United States."

The 30-day ban effectively closing the borders of the United States to asylum seekers and unaccompanied children took effect March 20, was renewed on April 20, and could be extended indefinitely when it comes up for renewal on May 20.

Citizens Demand Safe and Fair Elections

The coronavirus has already wreaked havoc on the 2020 election schedule. Some states chose to hold primaries in the midst of the pandemic putting voters' health at risk. Others postponed elections testing voters' confidence in the state's ability to administer fair and transparent elections. All of this has served to highlight the obstacles many already face when trying to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

The Faithful Democracy Coalition argues that citizens should not have to choose between public health and a functioning democracy. The \$400M for elections in the CARES Act was a welcome start but is woefully insufficient. Faithful Democracy is calling for \$4 billion in the next response package for the Election Assistance Commission to hold safe and secure primary and general elections. The additional funds would support the following:

- No-excuse absentee voting with prepaid postage available to all registered voters during an emergency.
- Extended voter registration period with at least 15 days of early voting.
- Same day registration.
- Election contingency plans to protect the health and safety of poll workers and voters for those who cannot vote absentee.
- Online voter registration.

The coalition sent a letter to Congress reminding them of their constitutional obligation to protect the voting rights of all Americans and calling for the inclusion of \$4 billion for election security and vote-by-mail ballots in the next stimulus package. As the coronavirus pandemic continues, the United States must act to protect the voting rights of all Americans, particularly communities of color and other historically excluded people.



- Letter to Acting Department of Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf documenting the barriers to legal counsel for asylum seekers posed by the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP). LCWR (4/9/20)
- Statement of faith leaders in response to the threat COVID-19 poses to migrants in Central America, Mexico, and the US outlining priorities that must guide the pandemic response and recovery. LCWR (4/10/20)
- Letter urging the G20, IMF, and White House to cancel debt payments for developing countries in order to bolster healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. LCWR (4/13/20)
- Letter to Congress urging them to include important refugee-related requests in future coronavirus-related legislation. LCWR (4/12/20)
- Open letter in support of the Federal Immigrant Release for Safety and Security Act (FIRST Act) which provides urgent and critical restrictions on immigration detention and enforcement during the COVID-19 emergency. LCWR (4/15/20)
- Letter to Senators urging them to pass a clean Dream Act as expressed in the bi-partisan HR 6 and in S 874, to ensure that DACA recipients and eligible undocumented youth have a pathway to citizenship. Ann Scholz, SSND (4/17/20)
- Letter to the Trump administration demanding the halt of all deportations to Haiti during the coronavirus pandemic. LCWR (4/18/20)
- Letter to House and Senate leadership urging them to advance legislation that ensures all families have the care they need by providing access to testing and treatment for COVID-19; equipping states with sufficient financial support; providing protection and support to health workers; assuring capacity in the health system; and protecting against unexpected health care costs. LCWR (4/21/20)
- Letter to House and Senate leadership asking Congress to refrain from providing additional money to the Pentagon in this fiscal year and to deliver urgent and vital relief to the people of the United States in response to the coronavirus pandemic. LCWR (4/22/20)
- Letter to members of Congress calling for the federal government to protect voting rights during the COVID-19 pandemic. LCWR (4/22/20)
- Letter to Secretary of Education Betsy DeVoss objecting to the denial of Emergency Financial Aid Grants to DACA recipients and undocumented students. LCWR (4/23/20)
- LCWR comment to the Department of Health and Human Services' concerning the interim final rule, *Suspension of Introduction of Persons into United States from Designated Foreign Countries or Places for Public Health Purposes*. LCWR (4/23/20)
- Statement by US organizations on the release of *The Global Military Expenditures Report* documenting the exorbitant and irresponsible amount of money spent on militaries worldwide. LCWR (4/27/20)
- Letter to members of Congress urging them to craft both short-term relief and long-term recovery COVID-19 measures that create jobs, meet basic needs, save lives, and have the co-benefit of creating a more environmentally sustainable and resilient economy for all. LCWR (4/27/20)
- Letter to Congress urging members to act with urgency to pass another COVID-19 Supplemental response bill that prioritizes vulnerable individuals and communities, welcomes the stranger, and enables all people to live with dignity and the opportunity to flourish. LCWR 4/29/20
- Letter to Representative Pete Visclosky in support of the Congressional request to zero out the funding for the Western Hemispheric Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) in the 2021 Defense Appropriations bill. LCWR (4/29/20)
- Letter to members of Congress expressing gratitude for pandemic relief legislation that protects healthcare workers and provides economic support to those in need, and urging them to ensure that that the most vulnerable benefit the most in upcoming recovery legislation. LCWR (4/29/20)
- Letter to members of the US House of Representatives urging them to co-sponsor the *Robust International Response to Pandemic Act* (HR6581), as part of forthcoming coronavirus legislation to ensure that developing countries will be supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international financial institutions

(continued on page 10)

LCWR SIGN ONs & Letters

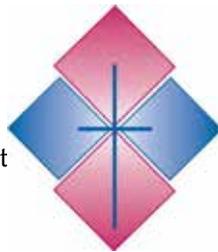
(continued from page 9)

- with the resources they need to confront this unprecedented global crisis. LCWR (5/3/20)
- LCWR quote on need for faith leaders to exercise their public voice with care in the 2020 Election in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. LCWR (5/4/20)
- Joint statement of anti-trafficking advocates urging policymakers to prioritize critical supplemental funding requests to protect those most vulnerable to human trafficking and exploitation during this global health crisis. LCWR (5/11/20)

Updates from NRRO

Although working remotely, the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) staff continues the mission to help religious institutes address retirement concerns. Applications for Direct Care Assistance are currently being processed, and the NRRO performs a Retirement Needs Analysis (RNA) on each one. RNAs calculate an institute's needs based on demographics, current cost of care, and assets available for retirement. More than 500 RNAs were compiled this year. Religious institutes—including those not eligible for funding—are encouraged to complete the Direct Care Assistance application annually. The information provided helps the NRRO develop a more comprehensive assessment of retirement funding and needs nationally.

Direct Care Assistance represents the bulk of financial support distributed from the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Awards can be used to meet immediate retirement expenses or invested for future eldercare needs. The NRRO anticipates that funding distributions will be made, as usual, by late June.



After much prayer and consideration, the NRVC staff made the decision to pivot and offer the Summer Institute via video conferencing. This decision was made to ensure the wellness of each participant. Using the Zoom webinar platform, the schedule has also been adjusted to meet the needs of our presenters and participants. For more information and to register, please visit our website at NRVC.net.

- **July 7-11, 2020: Orientation Program for New Vocation Directors** presented by Deborah Borneman, SSCM; Adam MacDonald, SVD; Chris Patiño, FSC and Minette Welding, IHM, \$675 for members and \$1012 non-members
- **July 13-14, 2020: Ethical Issues in Vocation and Formation Ministry** presented by Anita Lowe, OSB; Virginia Herbers, ASCJ; and Maria Hughes, ASC, \$300 for members and \$450 for non-members
- **July 16-18, 2020: Is it Generational, Cultural, Personality or Pathology?** presented by Donna Del Santo, SSJ; Sean Sammon, FMS and Crystal Taylor-Dietz, \$450 for members and \$675 for non-members
- **July 20-22, 2020: Understanding, Assessing, and Fostering Psycho-Sexual Integration** presented Lynn M. Levo, CSJ, \$450 for members and \$675 non-members
- **Behavioral Assessment 1** is postponed until July 22-24, 2021
- **Convocation, October 30-November 2, 2020** is scheduled, and registration is open.

For those needing financial assistance for workshops, the *Misericordia* Scholarship Fund is available. More information can be obtained by contacting Deborah Borneman, SSCM, director of mission integration, at debbiesscm@nrvc.net.

Communicators for Women Religious Seeks Executive Director

The organization, Communicators for Women Religious (CWR), is seeking an executive director who is responsible for overseeing the general administration, operational budget programs, and strategic plan of the organization. Responsibilities include fundraising, grant-writing and reporting, marketing, and community outreach. Although CWR is headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, the executive director may telecommute under certain conditions.



The deadline for submitting a resume is May 25. A [fuller job description](#) is available. Applications may be submitted [here](#).

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.

News from the UN

June 5—World Environment Day 2020 will be hosted by Colombia in partnership with Germany and will focus on biodiversity—a call to action to combat the accelerating species loss and degradation of the natural world. One million plant and animal species risk extinction, largely due to human activities. World Environment Day urges us to rethink how our economic systems have evolved and the impact they have on the environment.



June 12—World Day Against Child Labor 2020 will focus on the impact of the current crisis on child labor. The COVID-19 health pandemic and the resulting economic and labor market shock are having a huge impact on people's lives and livelihoods. Unfortunately, children are often the first to suffer. The crisis can push millions of vulnerable children into child labor. Already, there are an estimated 152 million children in child labor, 72 million of which are in hazardous work. These children are now at even greater risk of facing circumstances that are more difficult.

June 20—World Refugee Day was inaugurated by the United Nations General Assembly in 2001 in recognition of the tremendous work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. More than 50 million people are currently displaced by war and violence, some 33.3 million in their own country and 16.7 million as refugees, mostly in neighboring countries. Every 15 minutes one family is forced into flight. In a world where violence forces families to flee for their lives, the time is now to show that the global public stands with refugees.



We live in a world filled with the action of God's creating love and are partners of that divine activity in a time when major social and global change creates both enormous challenge and significant opportunity.

--LCWR Call 2015-2022



by Joan Mumaw, IHM
President
www.solidarityfriends.org

Getting Creative in the Midst of COVID-19 in South Sudan

The people of South Sudan are just now experiencing the onslaught of COVID-19. The latest figures indicate that there are 176 persons confirmed with the virus. Two infected persons live in the UN Protection of Civilian site in Juba. There are over 1 million persons residing in these sites, some for six years, located in several areas of the country. They were never intended to be refugee camps and are crowded, under-resourced, and lacking in access to healthcare, food, and water. The pandemic threatens those in the camp who have no possibility of practicing physical distancing.

Solidarity institutions are all closed indefinitely as are all schools and universities in the country. Still the president has lifted the lockdown on restaurants, bars, and markets and has opened the borders, allowing internal and external travel. The World Health Organization is working with the government ministry of health to provide PPEs, testing materials, and the upgrading of the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Juba. Without WHO there would be very little capacity to respond to this pandemic.

The Solidarity Teacher Training College is pursuing an innovative and courageous initiative to keep in contact with their students and continue the teaching and learning carried out between January and March. They have assessed which students have smart phones (17/126) and are beginning a pilot program, training teachers in English, math and professional studies via smart phones. Initially they were focusing on level 1 students. However, other students, learning of the pilot, are eager to be included. If the pilot goes well, the STTC will purchase smart phones for those who can access a cell phone signal. Cell phones are common in South Sudan since there are no land lines. The phones will be the property of the college, to be turned in when students are able to return to the college, which may only be in January 2021. Budget for the pilot is \$5000 which will be used primarily to purchase airtime for participating students. If the program rolls out, the cost of smart phones and airtime is anticipated to be \$20,000 or less than \$200 per student. The Solidarity team deserves credit for pursuing innovative and creative solutions to teaching and learning during this pandemic! For sure, it is the only online teacher training program in the country.

Please continue to pray for the people of South Sudan and all on the African continent who have so little in resources to cope with this pandemic. We believe that education is the most effective means of building the capacity of the people of this war-torn country to deal with this and other challenges coming their way. We so appreciate your continued support during these uncertain times when all are wondering about the viability of our institutions and concerned about protecting and caring for our own.