

LCWR New Leader Workshop Provides Education on Critical Issues for Religious Life Leadership

Recently 112 participants gathered in Mundelein, Illinois for the New Leader Workshop. Leaders from 24 religious congregations, representing 14 of the 15 LCWR regions, 14 states around the country and Canada attended the March 30 – April 2 workshop at Center for Development in Ministry at the University of St. Mary of the Lake.

The workshop this year was re-designed to contextualize the “Dimensions of Leadership” which is the basic structure of the LCWR *Leading from Within Manual*. Carole Shinnick, SSND facilitated the components of the program which was also integrated with prayer and ritual.



The sessions, which involved interaction with participants, included the dimensions of spiritual leadership led by Mary Hughes, OP; leaders and civil law, Amy Hereford, CSJ; leaders and canon law, Lynn Jarrell, OSU; finances, Hertha Longo, CSA; communications, Mira Mosle, BVM; and personnel issues and holistic leadership, Fran Repka, RSM.

Throughout the gathering there were also facilitated conversations, integration sessions and the processing of the workshop as leadership teams. With presentation and interaction, Mary Hughes concluded the weekend with her presentation on leading a congregation by helping them read the signs of the times as God’s word.

Comments from the workshop participants included:

“The topics and speakers were vital for new leaders. Each woman spoke to the needs of today. Team meetings were very practical and a good chance to listen and process together in a more objective setting.”

“I found the entire workshop very helpful and will definitely encourage others to attend. Not only has the input

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From the LCWR Presidency
We Were Made for These Times

by Beatrice Eichten, OSF -- LCWR President

*Stay with us tonight
As we weave love*

*And reveal ourselves,
Reveal ourselves*

*As His precious
Garments.*

-- Hafiz



place, relating with ordinary people, speaking truth to the rulers of his time, and promising that there was room for a rich diversity of people in the Kingdom of God. His message was for then and for now. The challenge today is to believe that message and to believe that God needs and wants us to live wholeheartedly and lovingly in this world of ours.

Clarissa Pinkola Estes, a wise woman, gives this advice to a young person troubled by the state of our world:

Ware God's precious garments – what a powerful message! We are the way Jesus is present in our communities, our church and our world. It points both to how we use the gifts and limitations God has given us, and to how we see the face of Jesus in his life and words of truth and peace, in the face of children, the elderly, those who are poor and homeless, the helpless, and in the people we encounter every day.

What do we do with the gifts God gives us? How do we use them in our ministry of leadership for the building up of God's love, peace and truth? How do we

*It is a difficult time to know how to live
with hope and peace.*

*What we can know is that we are born into
this specific time and place for a reason.*

relate to the increasing war, violence and deceit in our government and world? How are we to remain faithful in a church that too often marginalizes women and our contemporary expression of religious consecration? There is no easy answer to these questions. It is a difficult time to know how to live with hope and peace. What we can know is that we are born into this specific time and place for a reason. God has created us uniquely to live in this body, this family, this congregation, and this set of circumstances and relationships for a reason. Jesus lived among us at a particular time and

*... I urge you, ask you, gentle you, to please not spend
your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Espe-
cially do not lose hope. Most particularly because, the*

*All we can and need to do
is to bring the
strength, beauty and commitment
of our loving hearts and
courageous action
for today and
for the future.*

*fact is — we were made for these times. Yes. For years,
we have been learning, practicing, been in training for
and just waiting to meet on this exact plain of engage-
ment. I cannot tell you often enough that we are definite-
ly the leaders we have been waiting for, and that we have
been raised since childhood for this time precisely.*

Yes, we are called to “meet on this exact plain of engagement,” bringing the gifts we have and receiving the gifts of others in a mutual exchange of loving trust. We are the garments of God. All we can and need to do is to bring the strength, beauty and commitment of our loving hearts and courageous action for today and for the future.

Leaders Reflect on the Metaphor of Hurricane Katrina at 2006 LCWR Assembly

Four leaders of congregations based in New Orleans whose members and whose property were deeply impacted by Hurricane Katrina will serve as panelists at the LCWR assembly.

The leaders are Beth Fitzpatrick, O Carm, president of the Congregation of Our Lady of Mount Carmel; Mary Kay Kinberger, MSC, congregational leader of the Marianites of the Holy Cross; Sylvia Thibodeaux, SSF, congregational leader of the Sisters of the Holy Family; and Dorothy Trosclair, OP; president of the Eucharistic Missionaries of St. Dominic. They will explore the question of how to connect the richness of the inner world with the significant challenges and movements of a given time, particularly when that time itself seems meaningless. They will also address the topic of Katrina as a metaphor for this time in the history of religious life.

Donna Markham, OP, prioress of the Adrian Dominican Congregation and a licensed clinical psychologist, will moderate the panel.

Beth
Fitzpatrick,
O Carm



Sylvia
Thibodeaux,
SSF



Mary Kay
Kinberger,
MSC

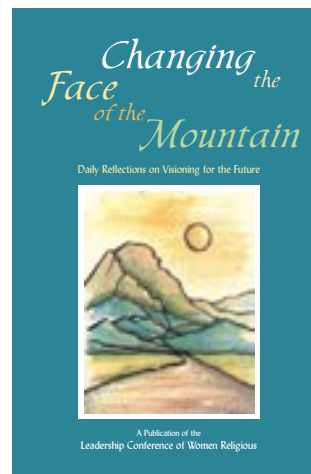


Dorothy
Trosclair,
OP



Donna Markham, OP

Changing the Face of the Mountain



Copies of the LCWR reflection book, *Changing the Face of the Mountain*, are in the mail to all LCWR members, associates and subscribers.

Some additional copies are available for purchase. Forms for ordering books are available on the LCWR website under Publications at <http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrpublications/2006reflectionorder.pdf>.

The Catholic Alliance for the Common Good Seeks Contact Persons

The Catholic Alliance for the Common Good continues to promote principles of Catholic social teachings in the 2006 congressional elections. Its work will focus on four states with key elections: Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan and West Virginia. In late March, a message was sent from the LCWR office to chairs of regions 3, 4, 6, and 7, and to justice and peace coordinators, asking for sisters who would be willing to receive information about programs, press conferences, and events, and might be called on to write letters to the editor, meet with a bishop, attend a town meeting, etc.

Additional contact people in these states are needed — members of religious congregations, colleges, universities, and justice centers. Names, addresses and e-mail addresses can be submitted to Marie Lucey, OSF, LCWR associate director for social mission at mlucey@lcwr.org.



LCWR Continues Efforts in Justice for Immigrants Campaign

LCWR has been a core group member of the Catholic church's Justice for Immigrants (JFI) Campaign, an effort designed to unite and mobilize a network of Catholic institutions supporting a broad legalization program and immigration reform.

At their April meeting, the core group considered ways to keep up the current momentum around immigration. Ideas included contacting Spanish radio DJ's to ask them to announce the JFI website, since the crowds assembled in recent rallies learned about events through Spanish radio as well as through churches and organizations. The most recent JFI newsletter includes a list of dioceses that have official contact persons, a list of JFI participating organizations, a legislative update, and information about parish kits. See: http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/files/JFI_Newsletter_04-15-06.pdf.



Please remember to inform the LCWR national office of any changes in membership or membership information.

A "Change of Leadership" form is on the LCWR website at: <http://www.lcwr.org/lcwraboutus/membership.htm>.

LCWR National Board Issues Statement on Immigration Reform

Many members of LCWR congregations have been actively advocating for comprehensive immigration reform, and the congressional Easter break provided an opportune time for the LCWR national board to issue a public statement stating LCWR's position. The Senate had failed to agree on a compromise bill and was expected to go back to the issue when they returned to Washington. In cities around the country, huge crowds of immigrants and supporters raised their voices on behalf of immigrant rights, proclaiming their allegiance to the United States and rejecting criminalization. Bishops, priests and religious joined many of the rallies, while some Catholics took anti-immigrant positions, showing the division within the Catholic community as well as the country on immigrants. LCWR's position is made clear in the statement which can be found on its website, along with the press release: <http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrpressreleases/publicstatements.htm> and <http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrpressreleases/pressreleases.htm>.

LCWR New Leader Workshop

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been great, the contacts and resources are invaluable."

"I appreciated the rhythm of the program, the gentle schedule; the content that touched on areas of leadership; the quality of the presenters and their presentations; the interaction with other congregations at table; and opportunity to be together as a team."

Staff organizers of the program were executive director Carole Shinnick, SSND; associate director, Eleanor Granger, OSF; communications director, Annmarie Sanders, IHM; and executive assistant, Suzanne Delaney, IHM.

Additional photos of this event are on the LCWR website at: <http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/NLW2006.htm>.

The 2007 workshop will be at The Retreat Center at St. John's in Plymouth, Michigan near Detroit. Registration and information will be available in October 2006 and will also be posted on the LCWR website at www.lcwr.org.



Members of the LCWR Global Concerns Committee and CMSM Justice and Peace Committee meet in New York City: Michael McNulty, SJ; Marie Lucey, OSF; Chris Promis, CSSp; Gilmary Bauer, RSM; Jim Stormes, SJ; John Celichowski, OFM Cap; Andrea Nenzel, CSJP; Carol Descoteaux, CSC; Bill Quigley, CICM; and Joy Peterson, PBVM

Joint Justice Committees Meet with Religious NGOs

Members of the LCWR Global Concerns Committee and CMSM Justice and Peace Committee held their annual joint meeting at the end of March in New York in order to spend a day meeting with members of RUN (Religious at the UN) and touring the United Nations. LCWR and CMSM hold joint NGO-DPI (Department of Public Information) status at the UN and planned this meeting in order to determine how to use this status more effectively.

Many religious congregations hold ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) NGO status and have a member working in New York City in an official capacity on various UN issues. Lucianne Siers, OP, director of Religious Orders Partnership, provided an overview of the United Nations and how NGOs function, and arranged for a panel of RUN members to share their work with committee members and suggest ways for CMSM-LCWR to become more involved. RUN members encouraged the joint committee to help strengthen the link between DC (US government) and NYC (NGOs), and between national and global issues.

Committee members considered a number of ways to strengthen these links including committee participation in the September 2006 DPI conference; improvement in communication with RUN, e.g. sending them conference statements and resolutions and an annual conference call to identify common issues being addressed; advertising Religious Order Partnership programs; looking for opportunities to link issues addressed by the conferences with their global dimensions and keeping major global trends before the membership. Committee members were also asked to encourage LCWR-CMSM regions and member congregations

to invite a RUN member to speak at a region and/or congregation meeting about the United Nations and the work of NGOs.

One global effort which the committees have recently promoted is participation in "Fight Hunger: Walk the World" campaign on May 21, brought to the committees' attention by the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) promoters in Rome. LCWR and CMSM members have been encouraged to visit the website: www.FightHunger.org to learn how to participate in this campaign to support the first Millennium Development Goal, to cut poverty and hunger by half by 2015.

Additional items shared and discussed by committee members included The Catholic Alliance for the Common Good, the El Salvador delegation, jubilee celebrations of each conference, and justice and peace in religious formation programs.

LCWR Participates in National Coalition on Catholic Health Care Ministry Meeting

Two LCWR members of the National Coalition on Catholic Health Care Ministry, Kit Gray, CSJ, and Eleanor Martin, SCN, attended the coalition's March 28 meeting in Washington, DC. The major agenda item was a presentation on care of the dying followed by discussion. Presentations by Karin Dufault, SP, executive director of the Supportive Care Coalition and CHA vice president, and Tom Morris, vice president of sponsorship for the Bon Secours Health System, were well received.

Japan Revisited – Article 9

by Bea Eichten, OSF, LCWR President

Recently, Shinji Yamasaki, a Japanese correspondent in the Washington bureau of the Japanese newspaper *Akahata*, came to Little Falls, MN, to learn more about my trip to Japan last August for the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He was curious about this American nun who represented American Catholic sisters during a week of witnessing for peace and against nuclear armaments. He brought a colleague, Masako Usui, who wanted to meet the “one person in Minnesota who knew about Article 9.” I shared how my limited awareness of the aftermath of the bombing was expanded as I met survivors and learned more about Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. Since we are coming up to August, it is timely to revisit what Article 9 means for Japan and, potentially, for the US.

One objective of the Allied occupation of Japan after World War II was to demilitarize Japan so that it could never again go to war. During the occupation, the Japanese were unable or unwilling to complete a new constitution, which satisfied General Douglas MacArthur. He ordered his staff to draft a new constitution, which they did in less than a week. With only minor changes, the constitution, which is still the basis of the Japanese government, was accepted and went into effect on May 3, 1947. Major provisions include the establishment of a parliamentary government similar to the British system, an expanded list of rights, a statement that the emperor was merely the symbol of the unity of the nation, and Article 9.

While the American occupation composed most of the ideas and words in the new constitution, the initiative for Article 9 appears to have come from the Japanese. The majority of Japanese citizens approve the spirit of Article 9 and consider it personally important. They speak of their constitution as a “Peace Constitution.” However, concern is rising in Japan that the memory of the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will be lost as the survivors of the bombing die. Those who suffered the effects of the A- and H- bomb do not want to risk having another war with all its terrible effects. Concern is rising also as the US, which has nearly 90 military facilities in Japan and Okinawa, puts increasing pressure on the Japanese government to abandon Article 9 so that Japan can grow openly as a military partner

with the US. You can learn more by putting “Article 9 Japan” or “US military bases Japan” in your search engine. What if we would adopt the stance of Article 9 – “Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order,” [we] “forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes.” What a difference this would make in our world!

Japanese Constitution -- Article 9

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.



Support the LCWR Scholarship Fund by Recycling Ink Cartridges

Number of Entities Participating in Program
LCWR, CMSM, RFC, NATRI, LRCR
and 10 LCWR Member Congregations

**Amount of Money Received into
LCWR Scholarship Fund**
(From December 1, 2005 -- March 31, 2006)
\$371.20

**Congregations are asked to consider participating in
this program and inviting
other entities to do so as well.**

**Other possibilities are health systems, universities,
schools, and other works.**

Participation in the program is easy and has no costs.
Recyclable items include: ink jet cartridges,
laser cartridges and cell phones.

More information is on the LCWR website at:
<http://www.lcwr.org/lcwr/socialjustice/recycling.htm>.

Interfaith Committee on Nuclear Disarmament Concerned About Upswing in Nuclear Arms

Much of the discussion at the April 21 meeting of the Interfaith Committee on Nuclear Disarmament, of which LCWR is a member, centered on the US-India deal and the Bush administration's plan to produce 125 new nuclear weapons a year. Plans for the latter include building a new nuclear bomb plant at an existing weapons site, possibly the Savannah River site in South Carolina, Pantex plant in Texas, the Nevada Test Site, or Los Alamos lab in New Mexico. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) deputy administrator Tom D'Agostino told a panel of the House Armed Services Committee that the plan "would restore us to a level of capability comparable to what we had during the Cold War." These are chilling words for those who have been working for years to abolish nuclear weapons.

While a number of more liberal members of Congress support the plan as simply a replacement of old weapons with new, more efficient weapons, Friends Committee on National Legislation senior lobbyist David Culp stated: "This is a dangerous step in the wrong direction and will spur a new nuclear arms race. The US cannot increase nuclear weapons production and tell the rest of the world not to build these weapons."

The US-India nuclear cooperation deal is also alarming for a number of reasons. Even though it is supported by some liberal Democrats, more resistance is coming from Republicans. A number of US religious leaders have drafted an Open Letter to Congress expressing concerns. Congress needs to hear from all religious leaders, stating that in this current climate the US cannot afford to weaken international nonproliferation standards. A vote of 2/3 of both houses is needed to make the exception to the Atomic Energy Act that the administration is asking.

Addressing a possible nuclear attack on Iran, the Interfaith Committee urges calls to Senators urging support for direct negotiations with Iran as called for by Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN).

A new publication, *Breaking Faith With Nuclear Weapons: A Guide for Religious Communities*, is available for \$3.00,

with discounts for multiple copies. See www.faithfulsecurity.org. Catholics quoted include Pope Benedict XVI.



CHA April Board Meeting Includes Legislative/Advocacy Workshop

LCWR was represented at the Catholic Health Association board meeting in Washington, DC from April 5-6, where board members heard two excellent presentations, one by Diana Aviv, president, Independent Sector, and the other by Ellen Nissenbaum, director, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Diana's presentation on the legislative and policy challenges for nonprofit organizations initiated provocative board discussion, while Ellen's overview of the federal budget was both informative and sobering.

Board members also gave final approval to CHA's strategic plan, FY 07-09. Several additional items included in the report of Carol Keehan, DC were:

- The 2006 Catholic Legislative Advocacy Conference, held in Washington, DC in March, gathered 127 participants for health care policy discussion followed by approximately 100 visits to congressional offices.
- Additional legislative advocacy efforts addressed the FY 07 federal budget, support of the McCain-Kennedy immigration reform bill, and Catholic health care's commitment to providing benefits to communities.
- The Covering a Nation campaign has been organized into three sub-committees: engaging public and policymakers; coalitions, currently focusing on Cover the Uninsured Week in May; and motivating ministries.
- The CHA website on resources for helping victims of human trafficking has been significantly upgraded: www.chausa.org/Pub/MainNav/ourcommitments/immigrants/humantrafficking/.
- Nearly 40 leaders (executives, trustees, sponsors) from several member systems will participate in CHA's 2006 program of ecclesiology and spiritual renewal in Rome, April 23-28.

From the LCWR Executive Director **The Essential Season**

Carole Shinnick, SSND

*Out walking in the swamp picking cowslip, marsh marigold,
this sweet first green of spring. Now sautéed in a pan melting
to a deeper green than ever they were alive, this green, this life,
harbinger of things to come. Now we sit at the table munching
on this message from the dawn that says we and the world
are alive again today, and this is the world's birthday. And
even though we will never be young again, we also know we are still right here
now, today, and my oh my! don't these greens taste good.¹*



Is there anything more delicious than the post-Easter scripture readings? Only a few days ago the drama began with the ominous words, "...and it was night." Then - the betrayal, the abandonment, the torture, the death, and finally, the enormous emptiness. But, on Saturday night, gathered around the new-lit fire we hear the ancient and astonishingly fresh words, "He is not here. He has risen." And we shout, "Yippee! Alleluia! I knew He could do it!"

The desolate experience of Good Friday is the prerequisite for the elation of Eastertide. Now, like an off-stage observer, I watch the story unfold. I want to whisper to Mary Magdalene, "Take a good look - that's no gardener." I hold my breath until the discouraged disciples recognize their dinner companion. And I want to tell Thomas, "Don't be too hard on yourself. I would have thought the others were hallucinating, too."

Oh how I need this season of Easter, of spring. Each season has its own unique loveliness and character, but for me Easter-Spring is the most essential. By the time it arrives with its lengthening days, its brave jonquils, its fragile new greens and its exploding dogwood, I am starved for it.

This year I was blessed to spend Holy Week with two friends at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. I almost didn't go because my desk looked like an archeological dig of unfinished letters and aging post-it notes, but I went anyway. Thank goodness I had an attack of sanity!

Once I got to South Carolina I walked the beach everyday. I watched families flying kites, dogs chasing Frisbees, kids digging in the wet sand. I rolled up my pants legs and walked along the water's edge, letting the sand and surf rub away the callouses of

winter. While it was still Holy Week for me, it seemed to be Easter already for my beach companions. Their playfulness, their evident delight in the gifts of each gorgeous day reminded me that the grim events of Good Friday do lead to a glorious beginning. They also told me that if I had stayed back in my office, no one would have been better for it, and I would have been the poorer.

Sometimes I forget to take time to savor this world that a life-loving Jesus has redeemed. Sometimes I forget that our God is a God who hiked dusty roads with friends, prepared breakfast on the seashore, and asked for fish when he joined his companions in the Upper Room. Sometimes I forget that savoring is a form of worship and leisure is as necessary as air.

Myrtle Beach helped me to remember that "...even though we will never be young again, we also know we are still right here now, today, and - my, oh my - don't these greens taste good?"

¹"The First Green of Spring" by David Budbill reprinted in *Good Poems* edited by Garrison Keillor (Penguin Books: NY, NY 2002)

*Sometimes I forget
that savoring is
a form of worship and
leisure is
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Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly
Atlanta, Georgia
August 18 -- 22, 2006

LCWR New Leader Workshop
*The Retreat Center at St. John's
Plymouth, Michigan*
March 15 -- 18, 2007

LCWR Assembly
Kansas City, Missouri
August 1 -- 5, 2007

LCWR-CMSM Joint Assembly
Denver, Colorado
August 1 -- 4, 2008

LCWR Assembly
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 11 -- 15, 2009

FROM THE
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF
RELIGIOUS LIFE

Consecration, Vows and Sacred Bonds

The next issue of *Kindling*, the publication of the Center for the Study of Religious Life is being sent by bulk mail to CSRL members and subscribers at the end of April.

The FOCUS section of this issue is "Consecration, Vows and Sacred Bonds." Included in the section will be an introduction and articles on

- Consecrated virgins;
- Hermits;
- Secular institutes;
- Societies of apostolic life;
- Religious institutes;
- Consecrated life in the Eastern Churches;
- Private vows in lay movements.

Past issues can be seen on the CSRL web page at <http://www.religious-life.org/newsletters/index.html>.



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Editor: Annmarie Sanders, IHM

8808 Cameron Street -- Silver Spring, MD 20910

Phone: 301-588-4955 Fax: 301-587-4575

E-mail: asanders@lcwr.org Website: www.lcwr.org