

LCWR Honors Joan Chittister, OSB with its 2007 Outstanding Leadership Award

The 2007 LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award will be given to Joan Chittister, OSB. Joan is an internationally known writer, commentator, lecturer, and columnist who served as LCWR president from 1976-77. She has also served in multiple leadership positions within her own Benedictine congregation in Erie, Pennsylvania, as well as within the larger Benedictine family.



Joan is currently the executive director of Benetvision: Research and Resource Center for Contemporary Spirituality and serves on numerous boards throughout the US and abroad. She is the author of 30 books, is a weekly columnist for the *National Catholic Reporter* online edition, and has been the recipient of 12 honorary doctorates and countless awards.

Joan's extraordinary life and noteworthy contributions to religious life, the church, and the cause of justice will be commemorated and celebrated at the assembly's

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closing banquet. Joan will be present to accept the award.

LCWR initiated its Outstanding Leadership Award in 2003 to recognize and honor persons who have significantly contributed to the ministry of leadership and who reflect the LCWR mission.

The Next Frontier: RELIGIOUS LIFE AT THE EDGE OF TOMORROW



The 2007 LCWR assembly is fast approaching. Have you remembered to:

- ✓ Mail your registration to the LCWR national office?
- ✓ Register online at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center by going to www.lcwr.org/lcwrannual-assembly/assemblies.htm?
- ✓ Make travel arrangements (airline, shuttle, etc.)?
- ✓ Consider contributing to the LCWR scholarship fund? (See page 3)

From the LCWR Presidency **Living Out of Luggage**

by Mary Whited, CPPS — LCWR President-Elect

I am convinced that one of the qualities needed for leadership today is the ability to live out of a set of luggage. For the past month, I have been doing just that as I traveled to Rome for meetings of the LCWR presidency and executive director with Vatican officials. From Rome I flew to Finland, sailed to Estonia, rode buses and trains to Latvia and the Czech Republic, and flew back to Italy to visit with sisters and partners of my Precious Blood congregation. Then I headed back to Rome for the international gathering of superiors general of congregations of women religious.



General. We sought to weave a spirituality that generates hope and life for all. Contemplating the Word of God, we wove the five threads of women, laity, inter-religious dialogue, ecology, and migration into significant conversations about today's global and cosmic realities in the church and world. As we left the gathering in the "upper room" at the Hotel Ergife, we promised one another to continue to network and build on the strength and potential of our collective voices as women religious.

Bonjour, arrivederci, and verovetuloa have been added to my vocabulary, and unfamiliar languages have sud-

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denly taken on a familiar ring. Juggling local currencies, sampling delicious pastas and pastries, adjusting to changes in time, and tasting local wines accented the rich diversity I encountered. After a while, days blended, cultures meshed, and the boundaries between countries seemed to disappear.

Our meetings with Vatican officials, especially with representatives of CICLSAL, called for honest conversation. Mary, Bea, Carole, and I had carefully prepared to dialogue about challenges women religious face today. We prayed for wisdom to be true to ourselves, and we hoped that our message would reflect the current reality of our membership.

Together 850 leaders of women's congregations gathered in Rome for the International Union of Superiors

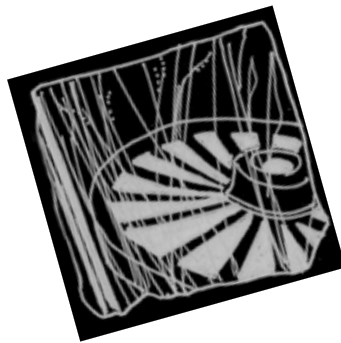
I am back at home and have unpacked my luggage. I pause to appreciate many gifts I received along the way. Even as I write this, I recall the Czech woman who told me how free she felt now that her country was no longer under occupation. I recall saying to a Dominican prioress whose sisters are ministering in Iraq, "I do not know what to say to ease your pain." Her gracious response brought tears to my eyes. Having been stretched by people I met, stories I heard, and places I visited, I am not the same person I was when I began my travels.

Back home I realize that leadership requires much more than the ability to live out of a suitcase. Leadership pushes us beyond the comfort of the upper room and invites us to embrace a diversity of cultures, languages,

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frames of reference, and ways of experiencing the sacred. Leadership invites us to weave new threads, broaden our horizons, and fan the flames that have been ignited. When dialogue is difficult, we witness to the truth that lies deep in our hearts. A fresh breeze blows across my face and through my hair. I have tasted, heard, felt, seen, and smelled the presence of the Spirit. This Pentecost experience brings new hope. The Spirit also travels!

Things to Remember about the LCWR Assembly



Staying at the Hotel Keeps Assembly Costs Down

The LCWR assembly will be held this year at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri. When the assembly participants stay at the hotel, the costs of the assembly are lower. LCWR receives a discounted rate on the meeting rooms if a sufficient number of hotel rooms are booked by participants. If this room quota is not met, the full cost of the meeting room rental must be paid by LCWR.

LCWR Assembly Scholarship Funds

Because of the generosity of LCWR members, each year an average of 25 members are able to attend the assembly who might not participate without financial help. In 2002 LCWR initiated a scholarship fund and since that time more than 150 leaders have received an assembly scholarship. Many have gone out of their way to express their gratitude, and some have even contributed back to the fund when they were later able to do so.

LCWR is again offering partial scholarships to members who may find it difficult to manage the full cost of the assembly. The scholarship may be applied to the costs of registration and hotel expenses. Anyone interested in more information on scholarship assistance may contact LCWR executive director Carole Shinnick, SSND, at 301-588-4955.

Donations to the scholarship fund may be directed to Eleanor Granger, OSF, associate director for finance and planning, at 301-588-4955.



Support the LCWR Scholarship Fund by Recycling Ink Cartridges

Number of Entities Participating in Program

LCWR, CMSM, RFC, NATRI, LRCR
and 16 LCWR Member Congregations

Amount of Money Received into LCWR Scholarship Fund

(From February 1, 2007 -- April 30, 2007)
\$430.50

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:
www.lcwr.org/lcwr/socialjustice/recycling.htm.

Catholic Iraq Peace Group Advocates for End to War

Representatives of several Catholic organizations in the Washington, DC, area continue to meet to share information, concerns, and activities related to the ongoing war in Iraq. Discussion focused on President Bush's veto of the spending bill, efforts to assure funding for development aid for NGO projects, and how church hierarchy could be urged to speak more strongly against the war and also be more public in their support of those who choose conscientious objection status.

Marie Dennis, who had just returned from the Pax Christi International meeting in Belgium, reported that participants from other northern hemisphere nations, who see this war as a US war, are more concerned about the US pressuring their countries for space to locate nuclear weapons systems. (NOTE: During the international meeting, Marie Dennis was elected as co-president of Pax Christi International, the first lay person and woman to be elected to this position. Marie has been serving as vice president for several years.

LCWR Represented at Presentation on Climate Change

On May 15, representatives of a variety of faith groups filled a room to overflowing to listen to Fr. Sean McDonagh, Columban missionary and author of several books on climate change, address "Grappling with Climate Change: Beyond the Scientific Implications, How Our Faith Urges Us to Respond." Using a slide presentation of scientific facts, global realities, church statements, poetry, and song, Sean provided a theological and ethical reflection that stimulated lively discussion and questions. He emphasized the fact that climate change is a moral issue that calls for urgent response from churches, and is a common cause for all religions to evolve a theology, spirituality, and missiology sensitive to the presence of God in the natural world. Catholics around the table agreed that the Catholic church must renew its theology of creation and that the US Catholic bishops, while deserving commendation for addressing the issue, need to challenge vigorously the immoral stance of the Bush administration.

NETWORK Board Addresses Issues of Development, Field Activities and Staffing Needs

During their spring meeting, April 26-29, members of the boards of NETWORK and the NETWORK Education Project (NEP) welcomed new members, extending a special greeting to the new NEP coordinator, Sara Dwyer, ASC, who previously served on the LCWR national board as chair of Region 10.

Board members addressed the serious need for development, the strategic goal of initiating field activities, and staffing needs. During the day on which staff joined the meeting, board members listened to staff address job responsibilities, staffing issues, and goals and objectives. Also, the board continued to discuss the issue of same pay vs. a pay scale based on education, experience, responsibilities, and other qualifications. For many years, NETWORK has followed a same pay policy as compatible with its mission and values. However, given the increasing difficulty in filling several key staff positions, a committee of the board conducted research and reported on their findings. Unable to come to a consensus, the board identified several areas requiring further research before a decision could be made regarding the current pay policy.

The upper midwest and Great Lakes regions were identified as areas to start with field presence, dependent upon NETWORK's financial situation, since these are areas of strength for the organization as well as of increasing poverty. Currently, Barbara Jennings, CSJ, former board member, has been hired to do work on the Farm Bill until July.



During the past several weeks, LCWR has added its signature to the following:

- A National Religious Coalition Against Torture (NRCAT) letter to Congress in support of the Restoring the Constitution Act, the bill to reform the Military Commissions Act.
- A Letter to Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, from 27 national organizations urging denial of the National Security Administration's request of \$88.8 million and the Defense Department's request of \$30 million for the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) for FY 2008.
- A letter to Congress initiated by the Coalition on Human Needs and supported by NETWORK urging expansion of the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credits to increase tax refunds for the country's poorest people.
- A letter crafted by Friends of the Earth to President Bush as he prepares to attend the June G8 Summit in Germany, urging him to work with G8 partners in support of urgent action needed to address the critical links between global warming and global poverty.



LCWR Leading from Within Retreat Tucson, Arizona in 2008

LCWR will again offer the Leading from Within Retreat which is open to the first 25 national members who register and send a deposit.

The retreat will be offered from January 20 – 25, 2008 at Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson, Arizona.

María Elena Martínez, OSF and Margaret O'Brien, OSU will facilitate the retreat which will include input, quiet, contemplative space, a variety of ritual experiences, and some opportunity for group and individual spiritual direction.

LCWR members who have made this retreat in the past have found it highly beneficial to be with other leaders as they prayerfully reflect on the blessings and challenges of religious life leadership during these times.

Registration forms for the retreat will be sent online to all members at a later time.



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From the LCWR Executive Director
Ordinary Time

Is there anything more delicious – or more taken for granted – than ordinary time? The lofty language of John’s gospel that we have been reading since Easter is moving and mystical, but I am happy to get back to the parables and miracles again. It’s nice to dine in fine style, but a hot dog on a summer evening in the backyard can’t be beat. It’s fun to get dressed up once in awhile, but doesn’t it feel good to scuff around in an old pair of shoes on Saturday? And, as much as you might like Christmas, isn’t December 26th more relaxing?



Carole Shinnick, SSND

or 15 – young, fresh faces looking out into our living rooms. And I think of all that lay ahead – the promise of days and years of ordinary time that has been snatched away from them and from all who might have known and loved them. There is no way to understand the lives of young people cut short whether in Iraq or Darfur, in Palestine or in our nation’s schools. A sad but real legacy they leave behind, like Emily, is a heightened awareness of the gift of everyday.

There is a poignant scene in Thornton Wilder’s play *Our Town* when Emily, a young woman who died in child-

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birth, is given the opportunity to return for one day in her life. She chooses her 12th birthday and watches the ordinary scene of her family at breakfast. Her anticipation quickly withers into disappointment as she sees how little of the everyday is relished and she asks, “Doesn’t anyone ever realize life while they live it? Every, every minute?” For Emily it is just too painful to watch how she and her family missed the gift of the ordinary.

Sometimes when I am sipping my first cup of coffee in the morning, watching the earliest light in the east, I realize how absolutely precious is this daily experience. Sadly once I get going I can become so seduced by my “to do” list and the tasks before me that I miss more moments than I catch. Yet, if I stop for a minute and look out the window, or pay attention to the scenery as I drive, there is dearness all around.

The evening’s news on PBS with Jim Lehrer often ends with a silent acknowledgement of the most recently identified military personnel killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Sometimes it is one or two people, sometimes 14

Now that June is here we enter the months of long days and warm nights. This is the season for waiting in line at the local frozen custard stand and going to evening concerts in the park. This is the season for “wasting time” on a boardwalk, or at a baseball game, or in a vegetable garden. This is the juicy season running over with sweet red berries. This is supper-on-a-screened-in-porch time. These are go-barefoot-on-the-grass days.

I want to be more attuned to ordinary time. I want to stop saving up all my relaxing for a kind of “crash vacation” once or twice a year. I want to find the precious tiny moments in each day that can wash clean my

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harried heart if I will just stop for a minute. Right now I hear a courtly cardinal singing sonnets right below my window. His mate calls back — another sacrament of the ordinary.

Matins

Welcome to the day, God said –
 I give it to you — sun, fruit, flowers,
 Basil by the bunches, acres of air, sweet showers.
 All I need is your notice.
 This is your today — singular forever be.
 Savor it. And remember me.



NCNWR Conference Focuses on Intergenerational Communications

The National Communicators Network for Women Religious will host its 13th annual conference Sept. 27–30, 2007, in Rapid City, South Dakota. Presentations and breakout sessions will be geared to the theme, “Mining the Generations: There’s Gold in the Wisdom.”

James Gambone, PhD, will speak on “Intergenerational Dialogue and Action” and will facilitate discussion on how to reach internal and external audiences from all generations. Tom Griffith of TDG Communications will speak on “Communication Trends: Past, Present and Future.” Other sessions will focus on tools of the communications trade, such as Adobe Photoshop, and effective use of video.

From the
Center for the Study of
Religious Life

Become a Member of the Center for the Study of Religious Life

Consider partnering with CSRL as its provides US leaders of religious congregations

- An analysis of trends and research pertinent to religious life in the US today and in the future and
- Useful tools for planning and reflection.

Membership invitations will be arriving in the mail soon or can be downloaded at www.religious-life.org/pdfs/NewMemberForm.pdf

Current members may expect their renewal form in the next few weeks.

Congregational leaders are encouraged to attend. Anyone who would like to receive a registration form is asked to contact Susan Oxley, NCNWR coordinator, at coordinator@ncnwr.org. A registration form (PDF format) can be downloaded from the NCNWR web site at www.ncnwr.org; click on the “Conference” link.

NCNWR is a professional organization of personnel responsible for communications within religious congregations of women. Its mission is to promote understanding of women religious; enhance their image and advance their mission; and to provide a network of professional support and education for members. Congregational leaders are invited to join as associate members. For more information, visit www.ncnwr.org.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

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

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat
Redemptorist Renewal Center
Tucson, Arizona
January 20 — 25, 2008

LCWR New Leader Workshop
The Retreat Center at St. John's
Plymouth, Michigan
March 13 — 16, 2008

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

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat
Franciscan Center
Tampa, Florida
January 12 — 16, 2009

LCWR New Leader Workshop
The Retreat Center at St. John's
Plymouth, Michigan
March 19 — 22, 2009

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

Legal Resource Center for Religious Fall Workshops

Sheraton Cincinnati Airport
Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport
Hotel Rate: \$99 plus tax

WORKSHOP 1

Membership Issues: Canonical, Civil & Psychological September 11-13, 2007

This workshop will provide leadership with information concerning:

- Appropriate civil, canonical, and psychological intervention in difficult situations with members
- Guidelines for "best practices" in dealing with healthcare/mental healthcare practitioners and treatment modalities
- Confidentiality
- Record keeping
- The rights and responsibilities of membership in religious institutes
- The exercise and limits of the authority of leadership in working with members

Presenters: Donna Markham, OP, PhD, Lynn Jarrell, OSU, JCD; Daniel J. Ward, OSB, JCL, JD

WORKSHOP 2

Civil & Canon Law Procedures for Administration September 13-14, 2007

This workshop will provide individuals in administration of a religious institute/society with:


- a hands-on experience with civil and canonical procedures
- a guide and checklist
- sample forms for handling such procedures as establishment of an institute/society or province; reconfiguration; writing and revising documents; extent and limits of authority; chapters of elections and decisions; finances and real property; ministerial works, patrimony; different types of departure and monetary assistance to the person.

Presenters: Lynn Jarrell, OSU, JCD and Daniel J. Ward, OSB, JCL, JD

Additional information is available at: www.lrcr.org

Marriott City Center, Pittsburgh PA
November 8-11, 2007

CONGRESS 2007
Compelled by the Spirit to be Fire
Impulsada por El Espiritu a ser Fuego



Religious Formation Conference

A transformational learning experience for

- Leaders
- Initial and ongoing formation Ministers
- Vocation ministers
- Formative communities
- Members new to religious life
- All members of religious congregations engaged in lifelong learning and transformation
- Associates and partners in ministry

Compelled by the Spirit to be Fire...

...in the World
with Carol Zinn, SSJ

...in the Church
with Gary Riebe-Estrella, SVD

...in Religious Life
with David Blanchard, O Carm

Plus seminars on formative communities, psychosexual development in the formative process, formation for a prophetic way of life, integrating an ecological perspective within the formative process, and more.

Registration brochures, with full information, will be sent with the June-July RFC mailing. Registration information also will be available at www.relforcon.org.